the weekly Standard

NOVEMBER 20, 2006

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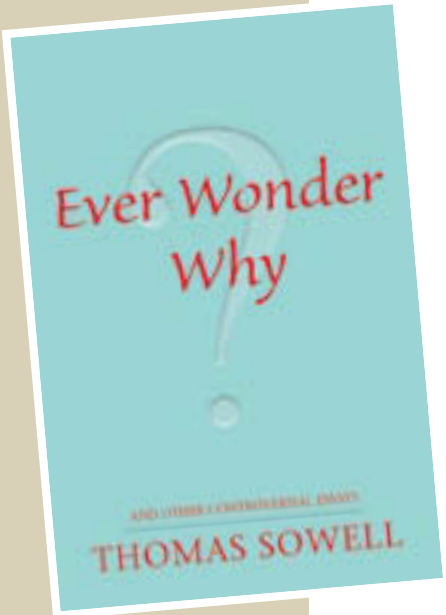

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- The "mealy mouth media" that calls terrorists "insurgents" and rioters "demonstrators"
- How "the idiocy of relevance" in learning has been particularly destructive in the education of minority students at all levels

Thomas Sowell *is the Rose and Milton Friedman Senior Fellow on Public Policy at the Hoover Institution. His nationally syndicated column is carried in 150 newspapers across the country.*

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

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Up in Smoke

Republicans weren't the only losers Tuesday night. The permanent adolescents agitating for marijuana legalization also took a "thumpin'" at the polls. The folks at the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) and their allies campaigned across the country for statewide referenda permitting the use of "medical" marijuana and in some cases legalizing the weed outright. Every single statewide pro-pot ballot measure failed to pass by a substantial margin.

In Colorado, a ballot referendum would have eliminated all criminal and civil penalties for marijuana possession. Voters rejected the measure 60 percent to 40 percent. A Nevada measure would have allowed adults 21 years and older to buy, keep, or use up to 1 ounce of cannabis. The Nevada measure would have also permitted the over-the-counter sale of pot, subject (of course) to state taxes. According to *CNN.com*, "fifty percent of tax revenue from the sale of marijuana would be used to fund voluntary programs for the prevention and treatment of the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances." The other half of the money would go to the "state general fund." Looks like the state will have to find other sources of "revenue," however. The measure failed, 56 percent to 44 percent.

Finally, a South Dakota referendum would have allowed individuals with a "debilitating medical condition," including children who obtained "parental consent," to possess marijuana for medicinal use. It failed, too, 52 percent to 48 percent.

What does this all mean? It means a majority of the voters in Colorado, Nevada, and South Dakota must have been aware of the evidence showing that marijuana use provides no health benefits, especially for sick people.

And that the people most likely to go vote for legalizing pot must have stayed at home on Election Day, watching Cheech and Chong movies and dealing with a serious case of the munchies. ♦

Markus Wolf, 1923-2006

It is fitting that the death of Markus Wolf should have passed nearly unnoticed last week. While press attention was focused on the elections here in America, the longtime head of East Germany's foreign intelligence section—the legendary "Man Without a Face," reputedly the model for John Le Carré's Karla—died peacefully, and very nearly anonymously, in his Berlin apartment.

As the man who ran East Germany's espionage rings, Wolf was not head of the dreaded Stasi, but he certainly personified the moral ambiguity, and Stalinist character, of the German Communist state. It was Wolf who perfected the "Romeo method" of dispatching agents to romance lonely clerks and secretaries in West German government ministries. When one of them, Günter Guillaume, rose to become a senior aide to Chancellor Willy Brandt, and was ultimately exposed, the sensation toppled Brandt's government.

A few days before German reunification, Wolf fled to Moscow, where he lived for a year before returning to Germany to face prosecution. Initially, he was charged with treason, convicted, and sentenced to six years in prison. But the verdict was overturned on appeal because Wolf, as the Stasi intelligence chief, had been employed by a "sovereign state," and he was ultimately convicted of ordering kidnappings. A two-year prison sentence was suspended.

In that sense, Wolf's East German career, and his skirmishes with a unified German judicial system, were emblematic. He spent a half-century successfully oppressing his fellow (East) Germans, subverting the democracy of his (West German) neighbors, in the service of a foreign tyranny (the Soviet Union). Perhaps Markus Wolf didn't deserve to be punished as a traitor to the Federal Republic of Germany. But the fact that the Germans never quite concluded what to do about his case, and that he died unrepentant in bed, suggests that Germany still has some reckoning to do with history. ♦

Contributing Senator

We didn't vote for him, but The Scrapbook would still like to congratulate James Webb on his victory in the Virginia Senate election. By winning, Webb, a former Republican who (briefly) served as secretary of the Navy for Ronald Reagan, becomes the first-ever Weekly Standard contributor to leave private life for national political office.

In fact we were more than a little amused when the National Republican Senatorial Committee ran television advertisements attacking Webb for statements he made in his essay "The War on the Military Culture" from our January 20, 1997, issue.

For the record, *we* still agree with

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Webb's piece, which highlighted the problems posed by the "assimilation of females into the military," even though he seems to have backed away from such ideas during the campaign. ♦

Poll Position

To usher in the new Democratic Congress, MSNBC's website offered an Internet poll late last week. The question was, straightforwardly enough, "Do you believe President Bush's actions justify impeachment?" These exercises are more parlor game than poll, of course. So there's no reason to get too excited over the fact that as of noon on Friday, 315,108 people had voted, and 87 percent said that impeachment was justifiable.

What is worth noting, however, is MSNBC's wording of the possible responses. The one garnering the most support read, "Yes, between the secret spying, the deceptions leading to war and more, there is plenty to justify putting him on trial." But why would MSNBC be so coy? If they're going to pin lefty conspiracies on Bush in their "poll," why not also include "causing Hurricane Katrina" and "profiteering in Iraq with Halliburton"? ♦

What Did He Know & When Did He Know It?

"I am met by Frank Whitworth, the head of the local gay activist organization Ground Zero and this year's parade marshal. He is nearly twenty years older than Pastor Ted [Haggard] and about twenty degrees rounder. If the two men were placed side by side, nine out of ten objective observers would say Pastor Ted was the gay activist and Whitworth the evangelical pastor."

—*Michael Lewis, in the* New Republic, *July 8, 1996*

Ripped from the Headlines

And finally, some news from the What-On-God's-Earth-Were-You-Thinking Department: A 22-year-old male was hospitalized last week in northern England after sustaining severe internal injuries from a firework accident. But this was no ordinary mishap as the rocket did not go off in the man's hand. Nor was it fired at him. According to the *Guardian*, "The man is reported to have got down on all fours, lowered his trousers and fixed a Black Cat Thunderbolt rocket to himself in front of a group of friends at the end of a firework display in the Monkwearmouth area of Sunderland on Sunday."

Apparently, this man decided to provide his own form of entertainment by playing what he thought was a harmless prank on himself. He was sorely mistaken—scorching one's colon is no laughing matter. Indeed, as the *Daily Mail* pointed out, "Safety experts today warned that misusing the explosives in such a senseless way can have serious consequences."

Where would we be without safety experts? ♦

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Casual

They Don't Got Mike

Exactly four years ago in this space, I documented the failed campaign of my former brother-in-law, Mike Benton, whom the enemies of freedom decided not to make clerk of the circuit court of Calvert County, Maryland. I owed him ink for an old favor. When we were both setting standards of academic excellence in our community college human sexuality course, he let me crib his copious notes on the Gräfenberg spot, which I've kept (laminated) to this day.

Though he long ago quit being married to my sister-in-law, Mike's no quitter. This cycle, he's answering his true calling: that of county commissioner. A bit of a tough guy, Mike's a former Marine who used to greet even women with friendly head butts, and who was once himself knocked unconscious by his drill instructor for not removing his hat at a urinal. "I deserved it, Ooh-rah!" he says. So it's small surprise that, as I stand shivering on the side of Route 4 and Mike waves to voters as he's done nearly every morning for the last month-and-a-half, he's not wearing gloves. "I need to keep my fingers free for when they flip me off," the now-seasoned campaigner explains.

While other candidates are addicted to alliterative exclamations (Wells Works! Go Gracie! Definitely Dixie!), Mike has gone a different direction with his omnipresent "Got Mike" signs. It's a play on the "Got Milk?" ad campaign, though I point out to Mike that he botched it by dropping the question mark. Now it sounds as if someone has made a citizen's arrest and is waiting for the police to arrive. He waves me off: "I'm not a question, I'm the answer." I withdraw the objection.

Since the last time, when just the two of us went campaigning, Mike's gone a bit corporate. He went to a four-day candidate school in Gaithersburg. He has wall charts next to his "Girls of *Maxim*" calendar that keep straight his meet'n'greets. He has 40 volunteers working polling stations. He has a campaign manager, a body man, and a driver, even if they're all the same person: Kevin Turner, a real-estate colleague of Mike's. Kevin is both a human Google map and the glue that holds the campaign together, earning him the nickname G^2.

Darren Gygi

Last Election Day, we took leisurely breaks for crab cakes and light refreshments. This time, Mike, G^2, and I have to make do with Dunkin Donuts in the back of G^2's SUV. "No time for lunch, stay focused Matt," Mike says, informing me that we'll be hitting all 23 polling stations—twice. Mike is a man with a fever. He works people like a grease gun, lunging at Democratic campaign workers (he's a Republican), hugging old women (his only previous electoral success was winning Northern High's Best Looking in 1984), putting the squeeze on everyone from colleagues to old high school pals to doting cousins, one of whom, Boo Boo, struggles when I ask her to tell me a good story about Mike from his youth. "I could tell you about the time he drank too much and ran stark naked through the bushes. But that was only five years ago."

Like most politicians, Mike is an optimist, listening to Zig Ziglar and Tony Robbins tapes in the car. He meets people and ingests them like toasted-coconut donuts. He has secured real estate listings and dates at funerals ("Her boyfriend died," he says defensively, "I felt sorry for her"). He loves talking to strangers, he confesses of his compulsion. "If I behaved like this without the campaign, they'd lock you up or think you're Forrest Gump or something. At least when I'm running, I have an excuse."

Our fieldwork done, we adjourn to Mike's regular watering hole, Robert's in Prince Frederick. G^2 nervously sets up his laptop in the back, waiting for returns. "I could chew through this wall," he says. Over plates of quesadillas and crab nachos, the bad news drops. There are five seats for commissioner, and with 100 percent of returns in, Mike finishes ninth out of eleven. I tell him to look on the bright side. At least we beat (11th place) Doug Parran like the village conga. "I need a beer," he says.

The next day he is still shell-shocked. He doesn't understand how so much effort yielded so little result. He doesn't understand why do-nothing incumbents are steering our county to ruin. "I don't understand," he says, "how three grown men can eat two whole boxes of donuts."

But you can't keep a good man down. Or Mike either. So he'll be back, maybe as commissioner, maybe as something sexier, like Judge of the Orphan's Court. Either way, he tells me he's already crafted an amended slogan: "'You didn't Get Mike last time, but you Got Mike this time.' Do you think it needs some work?"

Matt Labash

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Gerry Voeck

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The Great Wall

I enjoyed Terry Eastland's fine review of Darryl Hart's *A Secular Faith* ("God's Politics," Nov. 6), but I have a nit or two to pick. Quoting Hart, Eastland writes, "'Christianity separated what the Old Testament bound together.' In time Christianity, via Protestantism, stimulated questions about 'whether church authority extended to all the spheres of life implied by the Holy Roman Empire.'"

The result of that questioning was "'to reduce the Church's sway over European society'—which is commonly known as 'secularization.'" But Protestantism's quarrel was with the Roman Church, especially that of the Medici popes of the early 16th century. "Throne and altar" had become conflated after Constantine. The European monarchs were linked to the Roman church. English Protestants had no doctrinal quarrel with Henry VIII.

The great urge to separate church and state took its momentum from the Enlightenment, culminating in the French Revolution's virulent anticlericalism. One may recall Denis Diderot's vividly gruesome promise to "strangle the last aristocrat with the entrails of the last priest." Neither the anticlericalism of 17th-century Europe nor the secularist dogmas of the Enlightenment took deep root in colonial America, where 9 of the 13 colonies had more or less established religions. The clergy supported the Revolution, and General Howe complained after Bunker Hill of having also to fight the "black regiment" of Protestant clergy.

It was the purpose of the First Amendment's opening clauses to prevent the national government through Congress from choosing a national church from among the various establishments of religion already in place. Separationist impulses only came into prominence with the nutty jurisprudence of the late 20th century.

One might plausibly argue that the strength of the Christian religion in America today is owed to the tolerance emanating from free exercise by so many competing Christian sects, rather than to historically recent separationist impulses.

Jim Andrews
Port Royal, S.C.

Breakfast Embed

Michael Yon, whose artful mastery of modern battlefield storytelling has won him many loyal readers around the globe, has hit the nail squarely on the head with "Censoring Iraq" (Oct. 30). As a former public affairs officer currently serving as an operations officer in Afghanistan alongside Afghan and coalition members every day, I am routinely surprised at how little media coverage there is of this front of the war.

Newspaper editors back home have explained to me that there is a bit of "war fatigue" going on right now with the American people. The sooner we focus on winning these campaigns and getting a much more comprehensive portrait of what is happening explained to those back home, the sooner we can get back home to enjoy some of that well-earned "war fatigue" ourselves.

Maj. Arnold V. Strong
Kabul, Afghanistan

It seems that many journalists, unlike Michael Yon, are looking for American scandals in order to implicate the Bush administration, so one can't blame the military for being suspicious of journalists' motives. For example, a CNN employee has just stated that the way the network obtained a terrorist video was by telling the enemy that they would be given a "fair shake." During war, I'll take "no news" over smears of our fighting men.

Deane Pradzinski
Highland, Calif.

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"THEY WERE RAPED.

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THEN THEY LIT THE COTTON AND

BURNED THEM TO DEATH."

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the weekly Standard

Bush's Iraq Legacy

President Bush has a little over two years left in office. The central question facing him is this: What kind of Iraq will he bequeath to his successor? Will it be an Iraq in a state of collapse, a horrible and metastasizing mess dumped on the doorstep of the next president? Or an Iraq on a path toward stability and success—with increasing security for Iraqi citizens, an increasingly viable political system, and a developing economy? The answer will determine how this president should be remembered by future generations.

There are, of course, other grave issues at stake that will consume the Bush administration over the next two years: the continuing need to defend Americans from the threat of terrorist attack; Iran's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons; the containment, deterrence, and weakening of a nuclear-armed North Korea; the problems posed by an authoritarian and increasingly belligerent Russia; and the manifold challenges posed by a rising China. But the fact remains that Bush (correctly, in our view) took the nation to war to remove Saddam Hussein, and the success or failure of that war will be central to his legacy.

The current trajectory is downward toward failure. Indeed, this has been the trajectory for over three years, ever since Pentagon officials, civilian and military, decided to put far too few troops in Iraq: too few to bring order and stability to the country after Saddam's ouster; too few to prevent the growth of an insurgency; and then too few to put it down. At every stage in the ensuing downward spiral, senior Pentagon officials, with the approval not just of the secretary of defense but of two national security advisers and the president himself, have refused to increase American forces in Iraq to the levels necessary for success. On the contrary, they have always had one foot out the door: Pentagon military and civilian officials have been trying to exit Iraq ever since the military entered it.

On May 3, 2003—less than a month after U.S. troops reached Baghdad—the *New York Times* reported the Pentagon's plans to "withdraw most United States combat forces from Iraq over the next several months," reducing the number of troops from 130,000 to 30,000 by the fall of 2003. In every year that followed, military planners hoped to undertake a substantial draw-down of forces in response to hoped-for and much anticipated political developments in Iraq. And every time, those anticipated political developments foundered on the inability of combined coalition and Iraqi forces to provide the basic security necessary to make political progress possible. So the Pentagon kept enough troops in Iraq to avert immediate disaster, and also to prolong the conflict, but not enough to make progress and avert the prospect of eventual disaster.

The result has not only been a consistently inadequate level of forces. The endless cycle of promised draw-downs, followed by deteriorating security, and then cancellations of the proposed draw-downs, has been politically corrosive both in Iraq and in the United States. In Iraq, American policies have steadily undermined the people's confidence that the United States has either the will or capacity to provide them the security they need and deserve. So they have turned to their own sectarian armed groups for the protection the Bush administration has failed to provide. That, and not historical inevitability or the alleged failings of the Iraqi people, is what has brought Iraq closer to civil war.

In the United States, these policies have been equally damaging. The American people have rightly judged that the administration is floundering in Iraq and, worse, is not committed to doing what is necessary to succeed. This perception undoubtedly played a large part in last week's election. Now, as a result of three years of failed policy, many Americans, including many onetime supporters of the war, have decided that success is no longer possible and it is time to get out.

Many are looking to the Iraq Study Group, the commission headed by James Baker and Lee Hamilton, to provide a face-saving, bipartisan way for the United States to withdraw from Iraq as quickly as possible, with a clear conscience and a decent interval before the terrible consequences of that withdrawal manifest themselves. Most expect the commission's report will provide

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intellectual cover for retreat, offering elaborate explanations of how the departure of American troops will actually improve the prospects for a political settlement in Iraq.

The great irony, of course, is that while the Baker commission's anticipated report has been hailed as offering a long-overdue change of course, it seems unlikely to do so. The commission's supporters trumpet the idea that there can be no military solution in Iraq, only a political solution, as if Pentagon officials have not been making the same point for three years. The commission may call for more intensive negotiations among Iraqis aimed at establishing some new political *modus vivendi*, as if American diplomats in Baghdad have not been desperately promoting such negotiations for years. The commission may argue that our goal in Iraq should be stability rather than democracy, as if the administration would not long ago have settled for stability if it could have found a way of achieving it.

With nothing new to offer, the Baker commission's report—if it takes the shape most observers predict—will probably suffer the same fate as similar efforts in the past. It doesn't matter how clever or how "realistic" the political proposals drawn up in Washington may be: Unless the majority of Iraqis can be protected from terrorist bombers, insurgents, and death squads, they will not be able to negotiate and sustain any political solution. If the United States and Iraqi government forces cannot provide them security, they will increasingly look to their own sectarian forces to provide what security they can.

There is a popular theory these days that the pressure of an American withdrawal will force Iraqis to reach some kind of accommodation with one another. This would be more plausible had it not already been disproved by three years of painful experience. The United States has been promising to withdraw from Iraq since the beginning of the war, and the only result has been to drive Iraqis closer and closer to sectarian conflict. If we wanted to try something truly novel, we would tell Iraqis that the United States did not intend to withdraw until the insurgency was defeated and the sectarian militias were disarmed. It is precisely the illusion that a political solution is possible in the midst of increasingly rampant violence that has gotten us where we are today. Yet this is the illusion the Baker commission may try to sell once again.

There is no getting around the fact that under present conditions, an American military withdrawal, even if undertaken gradually, will bring about the rapid collapse of Iraq. These days one gets the impression that many Americans are sanguine about this possibility. Some seem to believe that things are already as bad as they can get in Iraq. This is willful self-deception. Were the United States to withdraw from Iraq prematurely, the sectarian violence we are seeing today would seem minor compared with the bloodshed of a genuine civil war. There would be no decent interval, no moment when the Iraqi people peacefully separated themselves into their respective sectarian quarters. They would battle for control of cities and towns and resources across most of the country. The result would be real, bloody ethnic cleansing—of the kind that the United States twice intervened in the Balkans to prevent, of the kind we failed to prevent in Rwanda, and of the kind we are now shamefully failing to prevent in Sudan. The difference in Iraq would be that this time the United States would be more directly responsible for bringing about this humanitarian nightmare.

If such considerations do not move the cool calculators of America's national interests, consider this: Among the many fruits of an Iraqi collapse could well be the creation of safe havens, perhaps quite extensive ones, for international terrorist groups. We have read some hopeful assessments that the Iraqis themselves will not permit al Qaeda or other terrorist organizations to operate in their midst once American forces leave. That hope strikes us as fanciful. Today, Sunni insurgents work in tandem with Islamic jihadists in their bloody assaults on innocent Shia civilians. In the sectarian violence that would follow a collapse of American policy in Iraq, such cooperation would no doubt continue. And in a chaotic Iraq consumed by civil war, who would take the trouble to ensure that some portions of Iraqi territory do not become little al Qaeda-stans?

What this means is that a failed Iraq would quickly become a base for terrorist operations against the United States and other Western nations. The Baker commission may recommend "redeploying" American forces out of the most contested areas in Iraq, including Baghdad, and stationing them somewhere "over the horizon." But how long would it be before this president or the next had to order those troops back in again to fight the terrorists we would have empowered?

Then there is the matter of foreign intervention. Observers worry today that Iran is too influential in Iraq. This fear is probably overstated. But imagine what would happen were we to depart and Iraq to collapse. Iran would intervene to protect its interests. And so would Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and other near neighbors. The regionalization of the Iraqi morass would make the present situation look comparatively stable.

This multifaceted cataclysm might not come on President Bush's watch. To continue along the present course, albeit in the Baker commission's new rhetorical guise, could buy enough time so that Bush's successor would have to deal with the consequences of his failure, not Bush himself. Maybe that is the gift that the team

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of Bush 41 is offering to Bush 43, a clever way of passing the buck. But is this president really willing to pass on an Iraq nightmare to his successor? Is that the historical legacy he plans to settle for in his remaining two years in office?

Instead of looking for a graceful and face-saving way to lose in Iraq, the president could finally demand of his civilian and military advisers a strategy to succeed. Such a strategy would do what previous strategies have not done: provide the number of American forces necessary to achieve even minimal political objectives in Iraq. Such an effort would begin by increasing American force levels in Iraq by at least 50,000.

The objective of this increased force would be to do what has not been done since the beginning of the war: to clear and hold Baghdad, without shifting troops from other contested areas of Iraq. As our colleague, military expert Frederick Kagan, has argued—and sources inside the U.S. military have confirmed—an additional 50,000 troops could secure the Iraqi capital. Once that is accomplished, clear-and-hold operations could expand outward toward the areas of the Sunni insurgency. This strategy would not pacify and stabilize all of Iraq in one year or perhaps even two. But it could secure and stabilize the vital center of that country, and provide real hope for progress—hope to Iraqis as well as to Americans. At least the president would be able to hand off an Iraq that had some prospect of success instead of one heading inexorably toward disaster.

Those who claim that it is impossible to send 50,000 more troops to Iraq, because the troops don't exist, are wrong. The troops do exist. But it is also true that the Army and Marines are stretched, and that this new deployment needs to be accompanied by rapid steps to increase the overall size of American ground forces. For six years, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld refused to acknowledge that his vision of the American military of the future did not match the present reality of American military engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world. We trust the new secretary of defense will understand the necessity of dealing urgently with the manpower crisis in our military.

If the president finally undertook to send the necessary number of troops to Iraq, we have no doubt that many of the recommendations likely to come from the Baker commission would make sense and could be supported. We share the commission's belief that the administration should actively seek bipartisan support for its approach to Iraq. It always could have done more in this regard. And we believe that leading Democrats could support an increase of troop levels in Iraq with the aim of stabilizing the situation. Those Democrats who hope to be elected president in 2008 should welcome any effort to ensure that they are not left to deal with a collapsing Iraq should they enter the White House.

There is a lot of easy talk of how a victory strategy in Iraq has been rendered impossible by Tuesday's elections. This is nonsense. First of all, victory in Iraq is a national priority, and to abandon it because of a loss of House and Senate seats would be irresponsible. But it is also the case that the loss of seats was in great measure due to a lack of confidence that Bush had a strategy for victory in Iraq, not a belief that he wasn't exiting fast enough. If the president makes clear that he is serious about victory, and has a strategy for attaining it, he will have the support he needs.

As for the Baker commission's likely recommendation that the United States should engage Syria and Iran in the search for solutions in Iraq, we are skeptical that those countries will want to be helpful. But it is one thing to seek their help while we are losing and withdrawing, when our negotiating position is at its weakest, and quite another to engage in such diplomacy while we increase our force levels and try to improve the security situation. If people are serious about negotiating with the likes of Syria and Iran, they should want our diplomats to go in with as strong a hand as possible.

Finally, as others have pointed out, if the Iraqis choose to organize their country in a less "unified" and more "federated" way, that is fine—as long as it is peaceful and stable. A peaceful and stable federated Iraq will, however, require no less a commitment of U.S. troops to provide security than a unitary one. As for our support for democratic governance in Iraq, that has been as much practical as moral. We have yet to hear how the imposition of a dictatorship in Iraq would solve the problem, or even be possible. Would a new, U.S.-approved strongman be Sunni or Shia? If one or the other, how would he exercise control over the country and with what army? The thing about a strongman is that he has to be strong. But it is precisely the conundrum of Iraq that no one and no group of people is strong enough to impose their will. That is why consensus is necessary among the different groups, and why some representation of the people's desires is necessary within them. But whatever political solution one favors, they all depend on achieving a minimum level of order and security in Iraq, and that is something that only American forces have any chance of providing.

The president has two years to turn things around and leave a viable Iraq to the next president. It should be obvious that "staying the course" is a recipe for failure. So are politically driven exit strategies. The president is left with the choice: quit, or do what is necessary to succeed. We trust the president understands that the task before him in Iraq is to find a strategy for success.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

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There's Still Life in that Lame Duck

Bush isn't done yet.

BY FRED BARNES

When Republicans won the House and Senate in 1994, President Clinton was badly shaken. At a White House press conference, a reporter suggested Clinton might no longer be "relevant" as a leader. It took weeks for Clinton to recover his composure. It turned out, of course, that he was as relevant as ever as a national leader. Presidents always are.

If President Bush was shaken, he didn't show it. He waited only hours after Democrats had captured Congress last week to assert himself. And he instantly changed the media story from an Election Day repudiation of his presidency to his removal of Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld. He followed that with a press conference at which he listed the issues where compromise might be reached with congressional Democrats. This was before he'd met with either Democratic leaders Nancy Pelosi or Harry Reid.

Bush is a lame duck, but only technically (he won't run again). He intends to be a very live duck in his final two years in the White House. When he talked to Henry Paulson, then the CEO of Goldman Sachs, last spring about becoming treasury secretary, he promised to push hard for a serious agenda no matter what the outcome of the midterm election. The result was bad for Bush, but he plans to keep his promise.

Is Bush suffering from delusions of grandeur? Not really. True, he'll have to make concessions, probably painful ones, on legislative initiatives. And his prospects for getting conservative judicial nominees through the Senate are slim. But as we learned from the Gingrich years, you can't govern from Capitol Hill. The president, even weakened as Bush is, remains the central figure in Washington.

Bush has an unmatched set of political tools. With strong Republican minorities in both houses, he has veto power. He never used it to cancel Republican bills, but he'll be less reluctant to kill Democratic bills. Bush is in charge of foreign policy, as we'll be visibly reminded next week when he travels to Vietnam and the following week when he goes to Latvia for the NATO summit. And he is the man with the megaphone. He can always command a national audience. Pelosi and Reid can't.

After six states passed referendums to hike the minimum wage, Bush has to give on that too. It is an area where he and Democrats can "find common ground," Bush said at his press conference.

With Rumsfeld's resignation, Bush demonstrated his willingness to make major concessions. Rather than change the strategy in Iraq, he changed the strategist. This is not the first step in a disguised retreat from Iraq, Bush aides insist, nor does it represent a turnover of national security policy to the "realists," as opposed to an idealist like Bush, who ran foreign affairs under Bush's father. The president told Rumsfeld's successor, Bob Gates, the goal is still to create a stable democratic Iraq that can defend itself—in other words, victory.

Congressional Republicans wish Rumsfeld's departure had occurred three months earlier, and some Bush advisers agree it should have. Whether that would have reduced Republican losses is unknowable. What is clear, though, is that Bush recognized an unpopular war, without victory in sight, cannot be sustained for long. The election underscored that. Something had to give, and it was Rumsfeld.

After six states passed referendums to hike the minimum wage, Bush has to give on that too. It is an area where he and Democrats can "find common ground," Bush said at his postelection press conference. This means he and Democrats will negotiate a new national wage floor, set currently at $5.15 an hour—probably on Democratic terms. Bush has little leverage on this issue.

He has considerably more leverage on immigration reform since Republican restrictionists, the bane of Bush's drive for reform in 2006, took a bath in the election. In the national exit poll, voters favored, 57 to 38 percent, a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants in the United States. Bush and Democrats are in sync on earned citizenship. But Democrats, given their subservience to organized labor, are leery of a temporary worker program to import cheap foreign labor. Bush wants one, and Democrats will probably have to yield on this for "comprehensive"—Bush's word—reform to happen.

Compromise will be tougher, if not impossible, on other issues. The problem with reforming Social Security is that Democrats, at heart, are reactionary liberals and the president is a reformer. What there is of a Democratic plan is simply to raise the level of income subject to payroll taxation to roughly $150,000 from the current $94,200, a humongous tax in-

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crease. And Democrats are dead set against creating personal investment accounts.

Bush is the world champion of private accounts, and rightly so. They are the only hope for making Social Security solvent without imposing a crushing tax burden on America's most productive citizens. Bush hinted while campaigning for reform last year—with no help from his timorous Republican allies in Congress—that he'd accept a small tax hike. But even that would have to be accompanied by personal accounts. "If we do not have Republicans and Democrats at the table for entitlements, nothing is going to happen," Bush said. So nothing is.

Nor is anything meaningful likely to happen on energy. Democrats want energy independence without increasing domestic oil production, an impossibility for the foreseeable future. Bush relishes more domestic production.

On education, Democrats pay lip service to reform. But they're really reactionaries, beholden to the teachers' unions. And the unions loathe No Child Left Behind, the president's signature reform program, because it requires accountability on the part of teachers and local school officials. It may be gutted or fall by the wayside.

The person to watch on minimum wage and taxes and entitlements and trade is Paulson. He's been given an unusually long leash by Bush to negotiate with Democrats. Bush said he has "instructed" Paulson "to reach out to folks on the Hill to see if we can't at least get a dialogue started . . . [on] the unfunded liabilities inherent in these entitlement programs."

There's a wrinkle with Paulson. He isn't as tax-averse as Bush, White House officials, or most Republicans. He is believed to be receptive to a deficit-reduction deal, for instance, that would raise the top rate (now 35 percent) on individual income and/or the payroll tax cap, in return for spending restraint and entitlement reforms. But Paulson's job, under Bush's orders, is to make deals, and Bush will have to decide whether to ratify them. In his last years, Bush will be neither lame nor irrelevant. ♦

Convenience Voting

The end of Election Day.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

At least you have to give John Fortier credit for trying. Last week, while every other political scientist and scandal-sniffing, goo-goo reformer was lamenting run-of-the-mill Election-Day difficulties—long lines, hiccuppy voting machines, bullying and incompetent poll workers—Fortier was trying to draw attention to a problem that is far more consequential, and far more radical: Election Day itself is about to disappear.

Fortier is a political scientist with the American Enterprise Institute. A few weeks ago he published a new book, *Absentee and Early Voting: Trends, Promises, and Perils*. The book's thesis is as follows: Thanks to such recent election reforms as early voting, vote-by-mail, and unrestricted access to absentee ballots—together known as "convenience voting"—"our nation is steadily moving away from voting on election day." Early estimates suggest that one in four votes this year was cast before November 7. The percentage has increased with every national election since 1980.

Voting by mail is now mandatory in Oregon, and nearly half of California voters cast their ballots absentee; in Washington state the figure hovers around 70 percent. Thirty years ago every state required voters to certify an excuse for obtaining an absentee ballot—illness, business travel, or other obligations, like school, that would place the voter out of state on Election Day. Nearly half the states now have "no-excuses" absentee voting, and all but twelve have dropped the once-universal requirement that absentee ballots be notarized or witnessed by a third party. Other states are expanding a category called "permanent absentee voter," a designation once reserved for shut-ins and the permanently disabled, who automatically received an absentee ballot every election year; now the category includes anybody who claims it. Experiments in Internet voting are underway in several localities. As reformers busily spread their voting reforms from one state to the next, it's not hard to imagine a time in the not-too-distant future when what we now call Election Day, the day when voters vote, will merely signify the day when voters finally stop voting. Precinct polling places will be a quaint memory.

Many fine, morally upright, patriotic Americans might welcome the demise of Election Day, for understandable reasons. Anyone who watched the grinding TV coverage on Election Night, with political analysts pronouncing extemporaneously on the election's larger meaning—the unspeakable lecturing the impressionable about the unknowable—will be happy to have any excuse to force them to, please God, stop talking, and if we have to eliminate Election Day for that to happen, then okay. But as Fortier notes, the radical change in the way Americans vote has been undertaken for motives that are much more arguable. Worse, the change is being accomplished without much debate or reflection about its consequences, even though these touch on elemental questions of citizenship and civic obligation.

Reformers are contradictory people, forever unsettled and dissatisfied with the status quo and, at the same time, imperturbably complacent about their

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ability to fix it. They hate to hear that a reform has unintended consequences, and they especially hate to hear that the reform not only doesn't work but might actually do the opposite of what it is supposed to do. So it is with convenience voting. Early voting and the other reforms were designed for two explicit purposes. The first was to increase voter turnout, which reformers always believe is too low, no matter how high it is. The second was to make the franchise more accessible to habitual nonvoters, and thus make the voting electorate more representative of the voting-age population as a whole.

Neither of these objects has been achieved. When Oregon reformers, for instance, claimed that mail-in voting had vastly increased turnout there, Curtis Gans of the Center for the Study of the American Electorate pointed out that this wasn't so: In fact, the first mail-in election, the 2000 presidential primary in Oregon, had the lowest turnout for any Oregon presidential primary. "Oregon has always had turnout levels between nine and ten percentage points higher than the national average," Gans wrote recently. "Mail voting has done nothing to change this situation." Elsewhere, early voting and no-excuse absentee voting have had worse than no effect; they actually seem to lower turnout. There are various explanations why. In states with extended voting periods, for example, each political party spread its mobilization efforts over several weeks rather than concentrating them in a single day, diminishing their impact and rousting fewer voters to the polls. "In years of increased national turnout," Gans found, "no-excuse absentee states experienced lesser increases. In years of declines, no-excuse absentee states experienced greater decline."

And how about the chronic nonvoters? Their response to convenience voting has been admirably dissected by Adam Berinsky, a political scientist at MIT. "Both proponents and opponents of electoral reforms agree," he wrote, "that these reforms should increase the demographic representativeness of the electorate by reducing the direct costs of voting, thereby increasing turnout among less-privileged groups." But both proponents and opponents were wrong. Early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, vote-by-mail—none has worked to "stimulate the unengaged voter." To the extent they've had any effect at all, the reforms have only stimulated voters who were already inclined to vote, by marginally increasing the convenience of doing what they were probably going to do anyway. Indeed, Berinsky found that convenience voters are better educated and have higher incomes than the average voter.

Illustration by Peter Steiner

Which explains why the reforms spread and flourish, even though no data support them and most observers agree they greatly increase the danger of vote fraud. Convenience voting is popular because it's convenient—of course—but the convenience is of a kind that particularly suits the needs of . . . people like the reformers. "These new procedures," Gans told me, "are for lazy middle-class and affluent people who would normally vote anyway but just want to make it easier on themselves."

Every age gets the reformers it deserves, and the sad irony is that the new voting reforms undo a host of reforms advocated by the do-gooders of a century ago, whose aspirations reached for something grander than mere ease and convenience. American voting from the first was a social affair—raucous sometimes, too, with barrels of whiskey often set out in town squares to encourage the celebratory mood of Election Day. More often than not, before the Civil War, voters declared their votes publicly and vocally, in front of their neighbors. But the sociability and public nature of voting made it susceptible to corrupting influences, peer pressure in particular. With the growth of concentrated urban populations, easily exploited by Tammany Hall and other political machines, progressive reformers reconceived voting as the crowning ritual of the civic religion. Voting was still a communal act, undertaken in view of the neighbors. But now it was draped with legal protections designed to reinforce its sacralized status. Blue laws banned the sale of liquor on Election Day. The secret

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ballot became universal, cast in voting booths hung with curtains to guarantee privacy. And the voting booths were placed in polling places that were themselves surrounded by a nonpartisan *cordon sanitaire*: All politicking was banned within fifty or a hundred feet of it, so the ideally disinterested voter could enter into the space cleansed of petty partisanship, accompanied only by his conscience and good judgment.

The new arrangement, coalescing over a generation or two, was earnest and high-minded, perhaps the summit of Progressive party poopery. As understood by William Allen White, Woodrow Wilson, and other professional improvers, it was the reform equivalent of a Swiss Army knife, performing several tasks at once—"the key to the whole problem of the restoration of popular government in this country," in Wilson's typically humid description. Not only would it frustrate the dark workings of the political machines, it would help create a "New Citizen," ennobled by his freedom even as he exercised it. Who can say whether this grand ambition was achieved? In some respects, the earlier reforms were undeniably successful. I well remember—if you don't mind a personal note—my own first glimpse of a polling place, in the middle 1960s, when my second-grade classmates and I were ushered into our school gymnasium to watch in hushed silence as lines of grown-ups waited their turn to enter the curtained booths, their overcoats heavy and their hats still dusted with snow, their faces inscrutable and solemn. The room was so quiet you could hear the rumble of the boiler room beneath us. It was as if we had entered a temple—which was the whole idea.

Well, that's all yesterday, or it will be soon. We're having no more of this New Citizen stuff nowadays. Voting will be thoroughly privatized. For this new age of voting reform advances a more contemporary aspiration: to perform every civic obligation individually whenever it suits each of us, in the manner that conforms to our own personal preferences, ideally while wearing pajamas. ♦

Donkey vs. Donkey

There are at least two Democratic parties.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

On November 9, less than 48 hours after Democrats captured the House and a few hours before Sen. George Allen conceded defeat to James Webb, giving Democrats control of the Senate, President Bush had lunch at the White House with Democratic representatives Nancy Pelosi and Steny Hoyer. In the brief photo opportunity following their meal, Bush played the gracious host. He twice thanked Pelosi and Hoyer for making the trip down Pennsylvania Avenue. He twice said the lunchtime conversation had been "constructive." And he twice congratulated Pelosi on her anticipated elevation to speaker of the House.

Pelosi, beaming, said she had offered Bush "the hand of friendship" and that the meeting had been "productive." She said she would work with the White House "in a confidence-building way" that "gets results." The two parties would debate the issues, she went on, but would also try to solve problems in a bipartisan manner. "We've made history," Pelosi said. "Now we have to make progress."

It was a fine sentiment, consonant with the view that last week's Democratic victory was essentially a rejection of the status quo in Washington and the conduct of American policy in Iraq. The electorate had voted to upend the balance of power and force change upon the capital. Whether the Democratic Congress will be able to bring change in a way that also broadens the party's appeal and bolsters its recent gains, no one knows. What seems plain, though, is that the greatest obstacle to future Democratic success is the Democrats themselves.

Over the next two years, there will be two Democratic parties. The congressional Democratic party will investigate the Bush administration and pass as much center-left legislation as possible. The presidential Democratic party, meanwhile—comprising aspirants to the executive office, senators Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, Russ Feingold, and Barack Obama; former senator John Edwards; governors Bill Richardson and Tom Vilsack; perhaps Al Gore—will travel the country, raising money, holding debates, and laying the groundwork for a national campaign that might put one of them in the White House and (they hope) result in an era of unified Democratic control of government.

The great fear of some Democratic strategists is that the congressional party will behave in ways that alienate the independents who brought it to power, thus threatening the presidential party's chances for victory in 2008. "Will the presidential candidates in 2008 have to run away from the Democratic Congress, or will they be able to work together?" one think tank scholar asked last week. He thought the former more likely. And the congressional party's power structure and the nature of the incoming Democratic majority lend some support to his claim.

The Democratic congressional leadership is untested. With the sole exception of Harry Reid in the Senate, who was briefly majority whip during the 18 months of Democratic control between 2001 and 2002, none of the new leaders has ever served in the ma-

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jority leadership. Pelosi, who was first elected in a special election in 1987, spent only seven years in Congress before the Republican Revolution of 1994. She became minority whip in 2001, when David Bonior resigned from the House to run for governor of Michigan; she became minority leader in 2002, when Dick Gephardt resigned from the House to run for president. In both leadership elections, Pelosi's chief rival was Steny Hoyer, a 12-term congressman from Maryland who is slightly to her right. When Pelosi became leader, Hoyer became whip.

Hoyer is likely to run for majority leader, and the Democrats to whom I have spoken expect him to win easily. This election cycle, Hoyer raised money and campaigned vigorously for Democratic House candidates across the country. He enjoys personal loyalty from many members of the caucus—which his chief rival, Pennsylvania congressman John Murtha, does not.

The third most important leader is the whip, who is responsible for "whipping up" support for votes. There was a chance last week that Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chairman Rahm Emanuel of Illinois, the architect of the new House majority and a rising power in the Democratic party, would seek the job. If he had done so, it would have meant a battle between Emanuel and Rep. Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, a well-liked member of the Congressional Black Caucus who was next in line for the position. But late in the week Emanuel said he would run for caucus chairman instead. This means there will be no fight and both Emanuel and Clyburn will ease into their leadership roles. Still, both are relatively new to governing. Clyburn was first elected in 1992, Emanuel in 2002.

To govern successfully, the Democratic leadership will have to navigate the majority's intraparty tensions. Last week the chief tension was said to be between "liberal" and "conservative" Democrats. In truth, in the House, there are fewer conservative Democrats among the incoming freshmen than some have suggested. On Election Day, Democrats had their largest gains in districts where a moderate-to-liberal Republican was replaced by a liberal Democrat. Political scientist Thomas F. Schaller, author of *Whistling Past Dixie*, points out that 10 of the 28 most liberal House Republicans lost to Democrats and that a third of Republican-held seats in the Northeast switched parties. The most conservative incoming House Democrat is probably Heath Shuler of North Carolina's Eleventh District, a former quarterback for the Washington Redskins who is pro-life and a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

How would the public respond if the Democrats passed a bill cutting off appropriations for the war—or, for that matter, ending the NSA's warrantless domestic surveillance program?

But Shuler is the exception, not the rule. In the House, both political parties are more ideologically uniform than ever before.

This is not quite the case in the Senate, where Democrats will have a much slimmer majority, 51 seats to the Republicans' 49, and moderates of both parties like to play spoiler. Just as Republican Senate leaders had to worry about GOP "mavericks" Susan Collins, Olympia Snowe, Lincoln Chafee, Mike DeWine, Lindsey Graham, and John McCain, Democratic Senate leaders will have to worry about centrists like Ben and Bill Nelson, Mark Pryor, Mary Landrieu, Max Baucus, Ken Salazar, and Joe Lieberman. Newcomers to the Senate, such as Bob Casey of Pennsylvania and Jon Tester of Montana, may also move in a more centrist direction. And no one knows how James Webb will behave.

If the Democratic leaders are able to corral their respective caucuses and shape the attitudes and votes of freshmen members, they will still have to contend with, and perhaps occasionally rein in, the liberal lions. Along with the new faces it brings to Washington, the 2006 election will elevate familiar ones to power. In the House, John Conyers is expected to chair the Judiciary Committee, Henry Waxman the Government Reform Committee, John Dingell the Energy and Commerce Committee, Charles Rangel the Ways and Means Committee, Barney Frank the Financial Services Committee, and George Miller the Education and the Workforce Committee. In the Senate, Patrick Leahy will likely chair the Judiciary Committee, Carl Levin the Armed Services Committee, and Ted Kennedy the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

These men are all savvy liberals with their own agendas, and they all want to make as much trouble for the Bush administration as possible. Depending on how they do so, that project might distract from the Democratic leadership's efforts to "make progress." And trouble of another sort could arise if, as expected, Pelosi appoints Alcee Hastings of Florida, who in 1989 became the sixth federal judge to be impeached by Congress in American history, to head the House Intelligence Committee over ranking member Jane Harman of California, who is to the right of her party but at the center of public opinion on national security issues.

The most dangerous potential trap for the congressional Democrats involves the war in Iraq and the broader war on terror. Among Republicans and Democrats in Washington there is little doubt that the failure so far to achieve victory in Iraq played a large part in the defeat of the GOP congressional majority. But the Democrats' ability to influence the conduct of the war is another matter. It is unknown exactly how the public would respond if the Democrats passed a bill calling for retreat from Iraq or cutting off appropriations for the war—or, for that

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matter, ending the National Security Agency's warrantless domestic surveillance program or expanding the legal rights accorded to terrorist detainees—but the reaction would probably not be favorable.

There are some signs that the Democratic leadership understands this, and will focus its legislative efforts on economic issues favorable to Democrats while allowing criticisms of the Iraq war to be aired in committee hearings. On election eve, on the *Huffington Post*, Pelosi outlined an agenda for the 110th Congress. It includes enacting all the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, raising the minimum wage, requiring the government to negotiate drug prices directly with pharmaceutical companies, passing another stem cell research bill, "cutting interest rates for student loans in half," cutting the tax credits and other subsidies that go to the oil companies, and "fighting any attempt to privatize Social Security." The agenda lacks any call for immediate "redeployment" of troops from Iraq. It says nothing about the Patriot Act or the domestic surveillance program. It ignores the looming nuclear threats posed by North Korea and Iran.

And that might be the best thing for the Democrats. One liberal columnist told me last week his hope that the Democratic majority would spend the next two years more or less ignoring national security while holding hearings and passing bills addressing what political scientist Jacob Hacker calls the "great risk shift"—the economic dislocations wrought by globalization that have done so much to make voters pessimistic about the American economy. In this scenario, a rise in the minimum wage, student debt relief, and other small economic reforms enacted by the congressional Democrats would strengthen the case of the presidential Democrats.

The 2008 Democratic presidential nominee would then have room to tack right on national security, leading her to victory. The Democrats would have unified control of government for the first time since 1993. And remember how well things worked out for them then? ♦

Pathetic Republicans . . .

A self-help plan for the GOP.

BY TOD LINDBERG

PATHETIC REPUBLICANS, who can save you now? With all due respect to Ming the Merciless and all due deference to Sen. John McCain's pending arrival on a Hawk-man rocket cycle in 2008, the answer is that Republicans can, and are going to have to, save themselves. To do that, what's required is frank acknowledgment that the national majority that brought them to congressional power in 1994 is a thing of the past—no longer there, or no longer theirs.

The wave that gave Republicans control of Congress for the first time in 40 years was truly national in reach and scope. You could see its effect in every region of the country, though of course it was at its strongest in the South, where the last redoubts of the yellow-dog Democrats were being overrun.

The GOP, under the minority leadership of Newt Gingrich and his chief lieutenant, Dick Armey, sought to "nationalize" the '94 election around its Contract With America, a 10-point plan for legislative action in the first 100 days of GOP control of the House. It gave Republican activists something to be *for*—in addition to what they were against, a government in which Democrats controlled both chambers of Congress and the White House.

The suddenly embattled Democrats portrayed the Contract With America as a document of political radicalism, and their charge gained plausibility thanks to the GOP's own hype celebrating a "Republican Revolution." But the contract was actually a shrewd exercise in coalition politics. Its designers hoped to attract new voters to the GOP by offering a menu of policy proposals that presented a clear alternative to the Democrats and already tested well in polling and focus groups. Moreover, it was decidedly silent on abortion and offered little to nothing explicitly addressing the concerns of social conservatives in the "culture wars." The expectation was that social conservatives would be satisfied with more space for their private gardens thanks to a less intrusive, less taxing federal government.

The GOP victory in 1994 had other important sources. It was a product of the arrogant culture of longtime one-party rule in the House; a Democratic administration more interested in tax hikes, a government takeover of health care, and gays in the military than the centrist agenda Bill Clinton had campaigned on; and a favorable electoral environment featuring numerous open seats, a large freshman class upon which the full advantages of incumbency had yet to settle, and Voting Rights Act-influenced gerrymanders that made suburban districts more GOP-friendly. Still, the contract was the unifying document of the early years of GOP majority: where to look for the answer to the question of what to do next.

The electoral strategy the 1994 results invited was the one Karl Rove successfully exploited in three elections before stumbling badly in the fourth this year: The way to win elections is to find your people and get them to the polls. The premise

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is that "your people" are out there in sufficient numbers to produce victories, given a technically competent effort to turn them out. You win elections not through conspicuous efforts to reach out to the middle to persuade undecided voters, who probably don't pay much attention to politics anyway. Rather, you focus your efforts on "your people."

The 2004 GOP success with this strategy took Democrats by surprise and delivered George W. Bush a second term. In the run-up to the 2006 election, by contrast, Rove and other GOP optimists spent a lot of time talking about the importance of the coming get-out-the-vote mobilization. Whether they actually believed it or were just blowing smoke in an attempt to keep "bad" from turning to "worse" is an open question. What is not in doubt is that "your people" weren't there, at least not in sufficient numbers. Nancy Johnson, a 12-term moderate from Connecticut, got about 20,000 fewer votes in 2006 than she did in the previous off-year election. Could be a turnout problem, no? But her winning opponent this time got 32,000 more votes than the Democrat Johnson beat in 2002. Johnson lost by more in 2006 than she won by in 2002. That is a problem of which turnout is at most a small part.

In New Mexico, Heather Wilson, whose fate at this writing is undecided, got 10,000 more votes in 2006 than she did in 2002. That's an indication of a superb turnout operation. But her Democratic opponent got about 25,000 more votes this year than her unsuccessful challenger in 2002. If getting out all your voters doesn't amount to 50 percent or more, there are limits to a strategy based on that premise.

Johnson's defeat and Wilson's cliffhanger are also emblematic of the geography of the GOP loss in 2006. Republicans have now been all but wiped out in the Northeast. This is not a sudden development. Beginning with the 1996 election, the GOP tide, as it receded, did so unevenly. The South stayed strong, still recording GOP takeaways from Democrats until this year, but the two coasts and the upper Midwest were becoming much more difficult territory for the GOP. By now, the de-Republicanization of these regions is about complete, and the problem has spread to the high plains, the Midwest, and the noncoastal West, such as Wilson's district in and around Albuquerque.

That more or less leaves the GOP with a majority it has the potential to turn out only in the South. And unless Republicans are content to be a regionally strong minority party, they need to do something different.

What might that be? Well, the first step is to understand that the issue mix in the Contract With America, though it produced an electoral majority in its day, has played itself out. Some of that 1994 agenda has been enacted, such as an end to the welfare entitlement. Some of it has proven impossible to enact even by a GOP-controlled Congress and a Republican president. Some of it, for example the call for term limits, responds to concerns that are simply dated.

What Republicans need is to be something more than the party of culture war. You can tap into your base to deliver victory if your base is big enough. The GOP's no longer is.

As the salience of the Contract issues faded, the GOP congressional majority in the House seemed to turn more and more to the largely symbolic politics of the social issues, conservative identity politics, and the culture wars—the ban on "partial-birth" abortion, the intervention on behalf of Terri Schiavo, the Defense of Marriage Act and the attempt to amend the Constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman, the limitation of federal funding of stem cell research, and, of course, restrictionist immigration policy.

The GOP stand on these issues is indeed overwhelmingly popular in the South. The ballot initiative banning gay marriage passed with 81 percent of the vote in Tennessee. But to take that very issue, if you look at how similar initiatives fared in other states, you see a much more closely divided electorate (and in Arizona, the initiative seems to have failed). Moreover, the cumulative impression of the GOP congressional posturing in the culture war is that that's all there is. The party has come to be defined as representing the concerns these issues reflect—and little else, or not enough else. That's an environment in which the revelation of Rep. Mark Foley's interest in teenage male pages detonates with maximum impact.

What Republicans need is to be something *more* than the party of culture war—and tax cutting, of course. You can tap into your base to deliver victory if your base is big enough. The GOP's no longer is. And its right wing is solid. Which means that the only place to go to enlarge it is in the center.

The American electorate is center-right. The core supporters of the GOP are conservative, which constitutes an advantage for the party over Democrats, whose core supporters are liberal or progressive. There are more conservatives. But if the GOP is *only* a conservative party, in the sense of being no longer able or willing to devise a Contract-With-America-style issue mix whose appeal extends beyond the social conservatism of the South, then it will be a minority party so long as Democrats understand they must appeal to the center. As they did this year, and could do again. ♦

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Even Happier than the Democrats

Europeans greet the election news with glee.

BY JEFFREY GEDMIN

Berlin

I RECALL a friendly dinner party in Bonn while Ronald Reagan was president. As usual, I was on the defensive. The other guests were piling on—"Reagan is a cowboy, a warmonger, an idiot-actor"—when suddenly a German guest decided he had heard enough. "Hey, let's not get carried away," he said "and condemn all Americans just because of this cretin in the White House." I'd like to say these over-the-top opinions reflected only the company I was keeping, but these sentiments were pretty mainstream at the time. So I had to laugh when the German media later eulogized Reagan as the man who helped bring down the Berlin Wall.

Will George W. Bush ever get his due? I sat with a group of left-wing *Haaretz* journalists in Tel Aviv recently, all of them deploring stupid Bush's disastrous foreign policy. Simultaneously, they more or less acknowledged that Bush has forever changed the conversation about democracy and the Middle East to the benefit of humankind.

I cannot think of a single European I know who will admit publicly that he likes the president of the United States. Joy has spread across Europe over the midterm elections. More than two hundred Socialist members of the European Parliament have praised the result as "the beginning of the end of a six-year nightmare for the world." Bush is bad, goes the mantra: bad for human rights, bad for the environment, bad for world peace, you name it. French author Bernard-Henri Lévy, yearning for that "better" America, wrote recently that midterm elections might overturn the 2000 and 2004 victories of the "'moral values' maniacs." I keep wondering why people find so much pleasure in hating this president and what he represents.

Of course, there are policy differences. But how can you explain so much heavy breathing about Bush and Kyoto, for example, when nearly all Democrats in the Senate, John Kerry included, had already rejected the treaty by the time the current president arrived? By the way, 15 E.U. countries who signed the thing have been having trouble complying with their own obligations. On Iraq, maybe things would have been different if we had found weapons of mass destruction. But then again, nearly everybody thought Saddam was hiding WMD and no one runs around screeching that the Clinton administration lied or that Germany's Green foreign minister Joschka Fischer is a monster.

More than two hundred Socialist members of the European Parliament have praised the election result as "the beginning of the end of a six-year nightmare for the world."

I have a theory. Several years ago, I helped convene a conference in Prague in parallel to a NATO summit going on at the same time. On the last evening of the summit, Czech president Václav Havel kindly invited our conference participants to attend a state dinner at Prague Castle. Chirac, Blair, Schröder, all the leaders from NATO countries were there. So was President Bush. One of our participants was a Gore adviser, who went up to the president at dinner and introduced himself. The president recognized this fellow, greeted him warmly and, turning on a dime, said to the French president standing nearby, "Hey, Jacques, I want to introduce you to a friend of mine." The president then took a short walk with this Democratic adviser, asking along the way about advice for new exercise equipment for the White House. In the end, my Democratic colleague was charmed by the warmth and down-to-earth quality of his encounter with the commander in chief.

If I tell a group of Americans this story, they tend to be impressed. Love him or hate him, the story suggests that Bush is a real mensch. If I tell this story to Europeans, and I've done so several times, they either look disgusted (as in—"how unsophisticated, how unstatesmanlike!") or their faces go blank because they don't quite understand the anecdote. And so my simple theory: Bush's greatest sin in the eyes of Europeans is that he is too American.

I get the feeling that when Europeans say they really like Americans, they tend to mean those who seem most like European Social Democrats, and even then they airbrush out inconvenient details like the fact that Bill Clinton favored the death penalty, that Hillary voted for the Iraq war, or that John F. Kennedy, that suave and promiscuous East Coast liberal, was also a staunch anti-Communist who frequently quoted from Scripture in his speeches.

George W. Bush is the full package of everything that makes Europe squirm. He is undiluted Americanism. He is anti-elitism. He's religion and

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piety. He's morality and muscle. He's patriotism and self-confidence. He is rather like that dreaded American animal, the "neoconservative." I gave an interview recently to the German weekly magazine *Stern*. Talk about a fixation. Question one: Would a victory for Democrats in the midterm elections mean voters are repudiating Bush's neoconservative policies? Question two: In light of failed U.S. policies, is neoconservatism utterly bankrupt? And so on.

It's the idealism thing in American foreign policy that trips our European friends up. I would be rich if I had a euro for every time someone in Europe has asked me about American hypocrisy, such as the time in the 1980s when the United States supported Saddam Hussein against the mullahs of Iran. You get the feeling sometimes that our European partners would be happier if we chucked our human rights concerns and, for the sake of consistency, stuck to pure realism. An Austrian editor once explained to me that transatlantic tensions often resulted from the fact that the United States has double standards, "while we," he added, "have none."

As for the president, George W. Bush learned from experience and toned down some of the unnecessarily harsh rhetoric of his first term. He is said to have gotten ideas from Yale historian John Lewis Gaddis. The president read Gaddis's critique of the president's foreign policy—imagine that, the president reads!—and invited Gaddis by for a chat before the beginning of his second term. He made the Europeans feel good by letting Germany, France, and Britain take the lead on Iran.

Now he's fired Donald Rumsfeld. But when European commentators say they are still yearning for an end to American unilateralism, moral crusades, and the influence of "fundamentalist evangelicals," what they really mean is that they are longing for a United States just like secular, post-national, consensus-seeking, Social Democratic Europe. But, of course, even with Democrats controlling the House and the Senate, it ain't gonna happen. ♦

What *Is* the Matter with Kansas?

Economic populism makes a comeback.

BY ROSS DOUTHAT & REIHAN SALAM

After an election season in which the GOP shot itself in the foot at every opportunity, it's easy to explain last week's sweeping midterm defeat as having more to do with Republican weakness than Democratic strength. But give the Democrats their due. They succeeded in spite of the "firewall" that the Republicans had gerrymandered around their majority, and they captured House and Senate seats not only in swing states, but in traditional GOP strongholds as well. Just two years after a narrow but decisive Republican triumph, the Democrats picked the GOP's locks on the Mountain West and the Old Confederacy.

They did so, significantly, by eschewing the Clinton playbook, and running away from the me-too instincts of the party's Washington establishment. This leftward turn was most apparent on foreign policy, but it wasn't just the Iraq war where the Democrats sharpened distinctions with the GOP; Democratic candidates moved leftward on economic issues as well. After falling short for years, in spite of racking up large majorities of unmarried women, blacks, and Latinos, the Democrats focused their efforts on "hunting where the ducks are"—namely, among working-class whites.

These "Lou Dobbs Democrats," as Jacob Weisberg called them in *Slate*, didn't just attack the GOP's corruption and malfeasance; they embraced a more thoroughgoing economic populism, taking a stand against the malefactors of great wealth who are the enduring *bêtes noires* of right-minded progressives everywhere, while mixing in protectionist and nationalist appeals on trade and immigration.

In 2006, Clinton's Third Way was left for dead, and in its place came candidates like Sherrod Brown of Ohio, railing against "job-killing trade agreements." In Virginia, Jim Webb hammered away at outsourcing. In Montana, Jon Tester angrily denounced Republicans for passing sweetheart deals benefiting only the rich, arguing, in his words, that "the middle class is being forced into poverty." In Pennsylvania, Democratic House candidates like Chris Carney and Patrick Murphy attacked GOP incumbents from the right on immigration, and won. In six states, all of them won by Bush in 2004, liberals put minimum-wage increases on the ballot, and they passed in all six, running ahead of Democratic candidates.

The strategy worked: Among voters without college degrees, the standard definition of the working class, support for congressional Republicans collapsed from 51 percent in 2004 to 43 percent, one of the largest drops in any major demographic category.

Hovering over these successes was the spirit of Thomas Frank, the author of the 2004 bestseller *What's the Matter with Kansas?* Today's white working-class voters are GOP dupes, he famously argued, voting on "cultural wedge issues like guns and abortion and the rest whose hallucinatory appeal would ordinarily be far overshadowed by material concerns." But Frank didn't just blame the conservative con men for this sorry state of affairs; he blamed centrist Democrats, whose pusillanim-

Ross Douthat, an associate editor at the Atlantic Monthly, *and Reihan Salam, a writer in Washington, are at work on a book on the future of the GOP.*

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ity on trade, taxes, unions, and other bread-and-butter questions of economic justice left these voters with nothing else to vote *for*. What the party needed, he insisted, was to downplay the social issues and return to first principles with a frontal assault on corporations, free trade, and global capitalism.

Though he was rarely invoked by name, the renewal of Democratic populism, particularly in the so-called red states so many liberals had written off, bore the stamp of Frank's analysis. The Democrats had attempted this populist turn before—Al Gore's "people versus the powerful" rhetoric, John Edwards's talk of "two Americas"—but this time around they made a concerted effort to soft-pedal their social liberalism as well. Democrats like Heath Shuler in North Carolina and Pennsylvania's Bob Casey Jr. loved their guns almost as much as they loved God, and they were at least ambivalent about abortion. And as seats flipped across the country, no one must have been more pleased with the results than Frank. His thesis, after all, had been vindicated.

Or had it? Here's where things get complicated. The original problem with the Frank thesis, as many reviewers pointed out, was its allergy to actual data. He claimed the white working class had been immiserated under GOP rule, even as they voted Republican in ever-greater numbers. But had they really? If we define working-class status by education, the white working class represents roughly two-thirds of the white population, and its median income actually surpasses the national median. Indeed, roughly 40 percent of these voters had family incomes over $60,000 in 2004, an amount of money that still goes a long way in most parts of the country. This is a group that literally *defines* the American mainstream.

What this means is that the white working class is so large and variegated as to defy easy generalizations. It includes successful small-scale entrepreneurs as well as impoverished blue-collar workers, managers at big-box stores as well as their struggling part-time subordinates. The Republican edge with these voters in recent years has been based on many things, including rational economic interests, not a grand deception. Working-class Americans who have thrived in the changing economy, the capital-rich who've seen their homes appreciate and their businesses grow, are supportive of tax cuts and deregulation. And enough of them are thriving to have provided the GOP with supermajorities of the white working class vote in 2002 and 2004.

Meanwhile, those working-class voters who find it harder and harder to keep up have been trending leftward. Indeed, far from becoming *less* Democratic over the past half-century—under the influence of those "hallucinatory" culture war issues, as Frank would have it—poor non-college-educated voters have become far *more* Democratic. These voters' struggles are real: The sad fact, as Thomas Edsall reports in *Building Red America*, is that only 45 percent of whites in the bottom third of the income distribution work at all, and almost 60 percent are unmarried. They depend on government services, and they vote for them.

But there aren't enough of these downwardly mobile Americans for the Democrats' populist appeals to win elections, at least until this cycle. Earlier this year, Stephen Rose, now a senior economic fellow with the center-left think tank Third Way, infuriated many to his left with a short paper called "The Trouble With Class-Interest Populism," in which he pointed out that as little as 23 percent of the American population "can be categorized as having a direct personal interest in supporting the social safety net programs that most of the public strongly associates with the Democratic party."

For Rose, the economic story of recent decades is not one of immiseration but one of dramatic gains for both middle and working-class families. His most striking finding: When you average-out family incomes over 15 years and capture only the peak earning years—from age 26 to 59—fully 60 percent of Americans will live in households making over $60,000 a year, with half of these households making over $85,000. This has meant that more and more workers feel like beneficiaries of the changing economy rather than victims of it—and as a result, feel comfortable voting for the GOP.

So what happened in 2006? Why is left-wing populism suddenly resonating? What's masked by Rose's averaging, and by the general picture of working-class success, are the tremendous fluctuations in annual income created by the globalized economy. This has made economic security, not poverty or prosperity, the central concern of today's working class—whether you're talking about the small businesswoman who can barely afford health care or the autoworker who's just discovered that his corporate pension is a mirage. And the bad news for the GOP is that the left has begun to figure out how to speak their language. In cutting-edge polemics like Jacob Hacker's *The Great Risk Shift*, the smartest liberal voices are focusing on voter anxiety about health care and income volatility—anxiety that the GOP hasn't even begun to find a way to address.

The good news for Republicans, on the other hand, is that the left's preferred solution—making America more like Europe through a vast expansion of the tax-and-transfer state—is still extremely unpopular with most voters, which is why Democrats talked up economic security in 2006 but were thin on policy detail. To working-class Americans struggling to figure out how to get ahead in a more competitive economy, when you can expect to change jobs several times in a decade let alone a lifetime, the "Lou Dobbs Democrats" don't have much to offer—a minimum wage increase, a critique of the alleged inequities of small-bore trade deals, and tough talk on border security that will be drowned out in a caucus that's eager to liberalize immigration laws and increase the influx of low-skilled laborers. Once the artfully named bills pass and the signing ceremonies fade into the past, working class voters will probably wonder, as Walter Mondale once put it, "Where's the beef?"

This gap between what the Democrats are promising and what they can deliver offers a renewed opportunity to the GOP. To date, Republicans have

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failed to come to grips with the issue of economic insecurity, offering table scraps and tax credits in place of real solutions. This signal failure is the reason that the Bush-Rove vision of a lasting Republican majority has hovered just beyond the GOP's reach. It's easy, however, to imagine a renewed "ownership agenda" focused on spreading capital ownership, freeing workers from employer-based health care, rewarding low-wage work, and defending the interests of hard-pressed parents. The question is whether Republicans, in their present state of drift and disarray, will be farsighted enough to embrace it. ♦

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Michigan on the Merits

The popular issue politicians love to hate.

BY TERRY EASTLAND

In 2003, when the Supreme Court upheld the use of race and ethnicity in the admissions policy of the University of Michigan Law School, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor stated in her opinion for the Court that a core purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment was "to do away with all governmentally imposed discrimination based on race." Even "a lawful [race-based] policy . . . must have a logical end point." When might that be? "We expect," she said, "that 25 years from now the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary."

Let's see . . . 2003 plus 25 is 2028. But this past Tuesday—22 years early, you might say—the people of Michigan went ahead and provided an "end point" to the very policy the O'Connor majority approved. They passed a ballot measure amending the state constitution to outlaw racial preferences in public education, employment, and contracting.

Voters favored the initiative by 58 to 42 percent. That's a landslide. Not even Jennifer Granholm, the incumbent Democratic governor reelected last week, did as well. Yet few predicted that Proposal 2, as it was called, would win big. Polls leading up to Election Day gave neither side a clear edge.

Michigan is now the third state where voters have used an initiative process to bar public authorities from granting preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, or sex. California was the first, in 1996, and Washington followed two years later.

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California businessman Ward Connerly helped lead both those earlier efforts. And in 2003, shortly after the Supreme Court not only sustained race-based admissions at the University of Michigan Law School but also, in a companion case, overturned a more blatantly discriminatory policy at Michigan's undergraduate school, Connerly received a phone call from Jennifer Gratz, the lead plaintiff in the latter case.

Gratz recognized that the net effect of the two rulings was to leave substantial room for state authorities to continue taking race and sex into account in the allocation of limited opportunities, such as places in an entering class or jobs in the department of motor vehicles or contracts to build a highway. Only by adding the nondiscrimination principle to the Michigan constitution could the issue be resolved. Connerly and Gratz formed a group they called the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative to promote such an amendment, and Gratz became its executive director. It was "a full-time job," she told me, the culmination of "a ten-year battle." Connerly contributed $500,000 of his own money.

Connerly and Gratz didn't exactly have an easy time of it. When the longtime House Democrat John Dingell heard that Connerly had entered his state to help organize the no-preference effort, he wrote the businessman a letter advising, "The people of Michigan have a simple message to you: go home." Connerly, his smile evident, responded by thanking Dingell for "such a warm and hospitable welcome to Michigan."

The welcome continued—in the

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form of efforts to keep the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative from getting its measure on the ballot. There were lawsuits, and there was bureaucratic delay. The group was unable to get the initiative on the ballot in 2004, as originally planned.

Then, once the measure was finally destined for a vote, state election officials decided to describe Proposal 2 on the ballot as banning "affirmative action"—a term not found in the text of the initiative. Opponents hoped that voters would see the measure as outlawing seemingly benign "affirmative action" and vote no. Even so, the measure won, resoundingly.

And it won over the opposition of everyone who was anyone in Michigan. Only one prominent statewide officeholder, the attorney general (a Republican), endorsed it. The state GOP treated the measure like the plague, with Dick DeVos, the (losing) Republican candidate for governor, on the record against it. Naturally, the Democrats opposed it. So did major corporations, including the automakers, and so did the unions. So did higher education. So did well-known clergy.

Even basketball coaches at the most prominent state universities got into the game. "I know what it takes to build a team," said Tom Izzo, the coach at Michigan State, "and that is diversity. We need all kinds of players on our team, and we need all kinds of students on our campus if we are going to be successful in building the Michigan of tomorrow." You think Tom Izzo recruits and plays "all kinds of players"—point guards, shooting guards, forwards, centers—on any basis other than merit?

The measure won even though MCRI was outspent eight to one by the leading opposition groups. And it won even though Connerly and Gratz were subjected to some pretty mean attacks (one group called them "racist"). Opponents also tried to confuse the issue by shifting the debate away from preferential treatment, claiming, for instance, that the measure would end all state-sponsored health care that is sex-specific, such as screening for breast and cervical cancer. (No such thing has happened in California in the ten years since its initiative was passed.) Not a few neutral observers saw the campaign for Proposal 2 as weak and fated to lose.

So why did it win? Maybe the reason was the principle of nondiscrimination it sought to enact. Maybe a majority thought it the right principle for the state to follow. And maybe the voters had made up their minds about that years ago, when the Michigan cases were litigated up to the Supreme Court. At that time, preferential treatment and the discrimination it entails were conspicuously before the people of Michigan. In the campaign for Proposal 2, former plaintiff Jennifer Gratz served to remind Michiganders of the issues at stake in those cases. She was, as one lawyer for the initiative effort put it to me, "a walking billboard" for what the measure was about.

Of course, there are other theories as to why the measure prevailed—chiefly that it was sold on false pretenses, as protecting affirmative action while banning preferences, when in fact it would do away with all affirmative action, which is, in this view, inherently preferential.

Now, the courts may get involved. A group that goes by the name By Any Means Necessary, or BAMN, already has filed in federal court alleging that the measure is preempted by federal civil rights law and violates both the Equal Protection Clause and, with respect to higher education, the First Amendment. And the University of Michigan—instead of moving to comply with the law—is considering a lawsuit, probably on First Amendment grounds. Proposal 2 is scheduled to enter the Michigan constitution on December 22, but before then some court could issue a temporary restraining order.

Still, the likelihood of success on the merits in these cases seems slight. The notion that the federal civil rights statutes and the Constitution actually require a state to discriminate has been tried before—against the California Civil Rights Initiative—and it failed. The First Amendment argument, which is new, maintains that public universities have a First Amendment right to determine their academic standards and the criteria for admission. Under the Michigan cases, there would seem to be such a right, but the means by which it is exercised would hardly seem to enjoy protection. A state may use preferences in the way permitted by the O'Connor opinion. But it isn't required to use them, as the opinion also made clear.

So the story of Proposal 2 may have more chapters. But already it deserves notice—far more than it's had since last Tuesday. "I had said all along that the people of Michigan would pass this overwhelmingly," says Gratz. She was right—again. ♦

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There are 193 countries in the world.
None of them are energy independent.

So who's holding whom over a barrel?

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The fact is, the vast majority of countries rely on the few energy-producing nations that won the geological lottery, blessing them with abundant hydrocarbons. And yet, even regions with plenty of raw resources import some form of energy. Saudi Arabia, for example, the world's largest oil exporter, imports refined petroleum products like gasoline.

So if energy independence is an unrealistic goal, how does everyone get the fuel they need, especially in a world of rising demand, supply disruptions, natural disasters, and unstable regimes?

True global energy security will be a result of cooperation and engagement, not isolationism. When investment and expertise are allowed to flow freely across borders, the engine of innovation is ignited, prosperity is fueled and the energy available to everyone increases. At the same time, balancing the needs of producers and consumers is as crucial as increasing supply and curbing demand. Only then will the world enjoy energy peace-of-mind.

Succeeding in securing energy for everyone doesn't have to come at the expense of anyone. Once we all start to think differently about energy, then we can truly make this promise a reality.

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The Leadership Struggle

One race a Republican's sure to win.

BY DUNCAN CURRIE

FOR A FORMER talk-radio host, Mike Pence sure speaks softly and politely. A three-term Indiana congressman, Pence, 47, describes himself as "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican—in that order." As head of the conservative Republican Study Committee, he's also become the sentinel of GOP budget hawks and government trimmers. When I interviewed him last January, shortly after Tom DeLay stepped down as House majority leader, many were wondering why Pence hadn't launched a bid to fill DeLay's post. "My passion is my young family," Pence told me. "My other passion is to serve the conservative cause." Both would be best advanced, he felt, if he remained Republican Study Committee boss. In the end, he wound up endorsing Republican Policy Committee chief John Shadegg of Arizona, a fierce conservative first elected with the vaunted GOP Class of 1994.

It was a three-way vote last winter, with Republicans splitting their ballots among Shadegg, acting majority leader Roy Blunt of Missouri, and Ohio's John Boehner. Blunt won a plurality of first-round votes, then lost to Boehner in a runoff. Shadegg finished a distant third, which many attributed to his late entry into the race.

But now, in the aftermath of their Election Night trouncing, and with Speaker Dennis Hastert declining to stand for a leadership position in the 110th Congress, House Republicans have a chance to elevate both Pence and Shadegg, 57, into their top two slots. Pence has declared for minority leader; Shadegg for minority whip. They will be up against Boehner, the current majority leader, and Blunt, 56, the current majority whip, respectively. Other Republicans are working to sway the races, and at least one, Energy and Commerce Committee chairman Joe Barton of Texas, has announced his own campaign for leader. But the four key players appear to be Boehner, Pence, Blunt, and Shadegg.

AP/ Susan Walsh

John Boehner

Despite Pence's popularity on the right, Boehner, who turns 57 this month, must be considered the favorite for leader. First elected in 1990, he burst onto the scene with the so-called Gang of Seven, a group of freshmen Republicans who zealously probed the House bank scandal. Last winter Boehner also painted himself as an anti-pork crusader: He had never voted for a federal highway bill and had long been critical of farm subsidies. But he also had close ties to K Street lobbying, and GOP reformers were hardly enthusiastic about his candidacy.

The obvious question now is: Will Republicans blame Boehner for the election debacle? Some might. Others might object that Boehner had been majority leader for less than a year—what could he have done to avert the anti-Republican wave? Surely the GOP leadership didn't take corruption scandals seriously enough. But while that may dent Boehner's image among grassroots Republicans, it's less clear that it will hurt him among his House colleagues.

His voting record is similar to Pence's, but not identical. Pence voted against the final version of the No Child Left Behind education bill and against the 2003 Medicare prescription drug bill, while Boehner helped author No Child Left Behind and supported the new Medicare entitlement. Pence also voted in favor of the massive 2002 farm bill, which Boehner strongly opposed. Although both men recently voted to build a 700-mile fence along part of the U.S.-Mexican border, neither is a hardliner on immigration. In fact, Pence has proposed a compromise plan that combines tougher border security with an eventual guest-worker program.

If Boehner looks poised to win

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the leader's race, many feel that will dampen Roy Blunt's chances of staying on as GOP whip. The reason is simple: House Republicans probably want at least one fresh face in their two most senior posts. Last winter, Blunt came under criticism for being too pork-friendly. Like Boehner and Pence, he and John Shadegg have broadly similar voting records. But unlike Boehner, Blunt was the whip under Tom DeLay, which makes it easy for Blunt's opponents to cast him as symbolic of the Old Guard. Democrats are sure to use the Abramoff cudgel against any Republican with close links to DeLay.

As we go to press on Friday, November 10, rumors are floating around to the effect that if Blunt thought he might lose, he would drop out and make room for Chief Deputy Whip Eric Cantor of Virginia. Some argue that Cantor has a better shot than Blunt at beating Shadegg. This is just speculation, of course. We'll know more in the days prior to the vote scheduled for November 17.

Cantor is one of the GOP's Young Turks, a new generation of House conservatives who have become strong advocates of spending discipline and market-oriented entitlement reform. This group also includes Jeff Flake of Arizona, Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, Jeb Hensarling of Texas, Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, Adam Putnam of Florida, and others. (Putnam, 32, is seeking to move up from policy committee head to conference chairman.) Last Friday the *Wall Street Journal* published an op-ed by Flake urging Republicans to "reemerge as the party of ideas" and resist being "assistant hirelings of big government."

That message may find a receptive audience amidst the postelection fallout. Whether it will translate into votes for Pence and Shadegg remains to be seen. (Flake endorsed both of them in his op-ed.) Boehner appears to have widespread backing from the caucus. Blunt's support is less certain. Echoing Flake, we can expect Pence and Shadegg to adopt one of the Democrats' mantras from 2006: "It's time for a change." ♦

A Wedge Too Far

The immigration issue didn't work.

BY TAMAR JACOBY

TURN ON A TELEVISION anywhere in America last month, and you were sure to come across a campaign ad talking tough about immigration. Democrats and Republicans, in border states and deep in the heartland: Everybody was doing it, and the spots were among the harshest of the campaign season. The A-word—amnesty—was a staple. So were calls for cracking down on the border. And there could be no mistaking the mood, or rather the two parties' shared assumption about the public's mood. The only question was whether Republicans would succeed in riding that anger to victory on Election Day—whether immigration would indeed be the wedge issue of the 2006 midterms.

No one knows how much money was spent on these ads or the websites and mailers that went with them. But the candidates might as well have poured their dollars down a drain. Long before the votes were counted, tracking polls showed that the issue wasn't "working"—wasn't energizing voters or closing the gap between Democratic frontrunners and their GOP opponents. The worse things grew in closely contested races, the more desperately many failing Republicans tried to play the "illegal" card: Rep. Bob Beauprez running for governor in Colorado, Sen. Rick Santorum in Pennsylvania, and some dozen struggling Republican congressional candidates in the Midwest and Southwest were among the shrillest. But the gambit didn't work. In race after race, even Democrats under attack managed to maintain or increase their leads. And by Election Night, the conventional wisdom of October lay in shambles.

Immigration was the dog that didn't bark. It did not prove an effective wedge issue. And as far as could be determined, it decided few if any contests. No congressional or gubernatorial candidate otherwise poised to win was defeated primarily because of his or her views on immigration. No more than one or two, if that many, struggling to catch up managed to ride it to victory. And the most stridently restrictionist candidate in the country, Arizona congressional hopeful Randy Graf, who ran a campaign based almost entirely on immigrant-bashing, went down in flaming defeat.

This wasn't for lack of trying by immigration naysayers—activists, candidates, or the Republican party establishment. The GOP leadership, particularly in the House, started planning their wedge campaign over a year ago. The party's cooler heads—in this case, the president, Sen. Bill Frist, Sen. John McCain, and the 21 other Republicans who voted for the Senate's bipartisan reform bill—argued strongly against a polarizing approach. Better to grapple with the problem, they urged—what the public wants is a solution. But the wedge players were more interested in political advantage. So instead of working with the Senate to enact law, they spent the spring and summer teeing up the issue for the fall campaign, casting a problem that in fact divides both parties as a contest between monolithic blocs: tough Republican enforcers and soft Democrat reformers.

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Struggling candidates and activist PACs were only too happy to play into this scenario, generating some of the nastiest ads in recent campaign memory. The 600-plus page Senate bill was reduced to a single sound bite: More than two dozen spots misleadingly claimed that it would pay Social Security benefits to illegal aliens. Democratic candidates who had not been anywhere near the Senate vote or even endorsed the bill were pilloried for its contents. On one particularly unsavory website, Michigan Democrat Debbie Stabenow was pictured in a sombrero, bobbing back and forth to Mexican music, over a text that thanked her in Spanish for what it implied was an un-American vote for the package.

Still other ads aimed directly at immigrants, calling them, among other things, "sneaky" intruders, "stealing" American jobs and taxpayer dollars. More than one Republican flyer mixed photos of Latino workers and Middle Eastern terrorists; several spots dwelt ominously on mug shots of convicted felons. Perhaps the ugliest commercial, out of North Carolina, showed a Latino man clutching his crotch, followed by an image of the American flag in flames: "They take our jobs and our government handouts," the voice-over ran, "then spit in our face and burn our flag." Far-right restrictionist groups—the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the Minuteman PAC, Bay Buchanan's Team America PAC—were responsible for some of this demagoguery. But the national Republican Senatorial and Congressional committees were not ashamed to put their names on far too much of it.

Meanwhile, even as Republicans painted themselves into a xenophobic corner, they inadvertently cast the Democrats as the party of pragmatism and problem-solving. Few Democratic candidates sought this role. Few if any, given the climate, wanted to run on the Senate bill's guest worker or earned legalization provisions. And some, particularly in the South and Midwest—Tennessee Senate hopeful Rep. Harold Ford Jr. and Nebraska senator Ben Nelson were among the more prominent—tried instead to out-tough their Republican opponents. But once pinned with the label "pro-reform," most Democrats had little choice, and many rose to the occasion. Incumbent senator Maria Cantwell made a persuasive case in Washington state; Jim Webb took a similar line in Virginia. And if anything, the harder the job and higher the stakes, the better these sometimes reluctant reformers performed—nowhere more surprisingly or impressively than at the epicenter of the immigration debate, in Arizona.

As Election Day approached, the contrast between these Democrats and Republicans wasn't soft versus hard. It was tough versus ugly—and polls showed voters very clear about which approach they liked better.

It would be hard to imagine a tougher test. More illegal immigrants enter the United States by way of Arizona each year than come through California, Texas, and New Mexico combined. Human smugglers and their accomplices have driven state crime rates to the top of the national rankings. And unlike almost everywhere else in the nation, a majority—6 out of 10 Arizonans—told pollsters that immigration was one of the top issues determining how they would vote in the midterms. Still, or maybe because of this, Arizona became the place where candidates—all of them Democrats, unfortunately—showed Americans how to talk effectively about immigration reform.

Gov. Janet Napolitano set the tone. She didn't denounce the fence or other border enforcement—in fact, she led the way, over a year ago, in calling for deployment of the National Guard on the border. She talked tough about smugglers; she repudiated amnesty. But she also insisted relentlessly that border enforcement was only a first step toward the solution: comprehensive reform of the kind proposed by the Senate. The more firmly she held to this tough but pragmatic line, the more frenzied her opponent grew—and as he promised more and more draconian enforcement, her lead only widened.

Other Democrats around the state were soon borrowing from the governor's playbook: Incumbent senator Jon Kyl's opponent Jim Pederson, Rep. J.D. Hayworth's challenger Harry Mitchell, and little-known state senator Gabrielle Giffords, running against the self-described Minuteman candidate, Randy Graf, in the eighth congressional district, which runs along the Mexican border. As Election Day approached, the contrast between these Democrats and Republicans wasn't soft versus hard, as the House leadership had hoped. It was tough versus ugly—and polls showed voters, especially Hispanic voters, very clear about which approach they liked better.

The results, in Arizona and elsewhere, speak for themselves. Janet Napolitano won handily with 63 percent of the vote. Randy Graf lost, 42 percent to 54 percent, and so did J.D. Hayworth, 46 percent to 51 percent. Another leading House hawk, John Hostettler, chairman of the House Judiciary subcommittee on immigration, was drummed out of his Indiana district. Jon Kyl squeaked by, but his margin of victory was not what he had hoped it would be in September. And not even the crassest anti-immigrant grandstanding could save Rick Santorum or the Colorado state house. Worst of all, looking to the future, the share of Hispanics voting for Republicans dropped to about 27 percent from about 38 percent in 2002.

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A survey conducted the weekend before the vote by the Republican polling firm the Tarrance Group helps explain this surprising tilt. (Full disclosure: The poll was commissioned by the Manhattan Institute and the National Immigration Forum.) According to Tarrance, there was little if any immigration wedge effect: Only 11 percent of the public said they were going to vote on the basis of their views about immigration. One in four conceded that their feelings about the illegal influx were driving them to the polls, but an astonishingly large percentage of this group eschewed an enforcement-only policy: Thirty-eight percent said they preferred a comprehensive solution along the lines of the Senate bill. As for the larger electorate, asked to choose between two candidates, one for enforcement alone and one in favor of a comprehensive package, 57 percent of likely voters preferred the broader, more realistic solution.

Will Republicans learn from this? Will the country? The results of the 2006 midterms are not a mandate for comprehensive reform—far from it. Still, they point the way toward change, opening the political space for better, more pragmatic policy by proving that it can be defended on Election Day. Randy Graf once boasted foolishly that if he couldn't win in Arizona, he couldn't win anywhere. And by the same token, if immigration pragmatists can triumph in Phoenix and Tucson, they should be able to win in any state.

It will still take a bipartisan majority to pass immigration reform. Democrats and Republicans will still have to compromise to get it done. And this may or may not happen in the 110th Congress. But one thing is clear and must be fixed: The Republican party has maneuvered itself onto the wrong side of the immigration issue. What it—and the country—needs is for reformers like President Bush and Sen. McCain to take up the issue again and rescue the GOP from the restrictionist corner it has backed itself into. ♦

'A Tidal Wave of Change'

This time the Republicans were swamped. Here's how to recover. BY FRANK LUNTZ

In November 2005, I was asked to make a presentation to the House Republican Conference. In the hallway where I was waiting, a large flat-screen TV played encouraging messages to members from their leadership. In this motivational loop of video, there was one particular piece that stuck in my mind. It was a slickly produced segment that looked like a Hollywood movie preview. It reviewed the last 12 years—how, in every election cycle since 1994, the media and Democrats had predicted "*a sea change in the House . . . a tidal wave of change.*" And after flashing a few newspaper headlines and quotes, the screen would go black until, writ large, a phrase appeared: "*They were wrong.*"

This year, *Republicans* were wrong. Their leadership was wrong. Their vision (if there was one) was wrong. Their messages were wrong. On Election Night, my firm did a nationwide poll of voters to measure and determine the extent of GOP failure. The results were ugly. This election was more than a message to the Republican personalities that have led America since 1994. It was a vote of no confidence:

• We have always had universal faith and trust in democracy, yet one-third of all voters (34 percent) said they had little or no trust "in their elected officials to do the right thing most of the time."

• We have always been the most optimistic and hopeful nation, yet almost half (48 percent) said they were somewhat or very afraid "for the future of America and where the country seems to be headed."

• We have always reserved our anger for our favorite sports teams and bad drivers, yet more than half (52 percent) said politics in America made them "mad as hell and [they] weren't going to take it anymore."

• We have always believed in intergenerational improvement as a core component of the American Dream, yet 57 percent believe "the children of tomorrow will inherit a worse America than what your parents left you."

The last time so many Americans were so angry, anxious, and afraid was in 1974, during a time of genuine political, economic, and military crisis. To call this election a "political correction" is to ignore just how widespread was the feeling of betrayal. Republicans rode into town in 1994 on a wave of discontent. Earlier this week, they were thrown out because of another.

Far too many congressional candidates refused to engage their constituents in a two-way discussion of the challenges in Iraq. Far too few hosted Medicare prescription drug forums to help seniors sign up and save money. Almost no one stood up to demand an end to the one issue that brought these members to power in the first place: wasteful Washington spending.

But within every rejection are the seeds of redemption. As difficult as it may be for Republicans to utter the words "Speaker Pelosi," they still have the White House (sort of) to serve as a check on congressional Democrats—at least for the next two years. If congressional Republicans want and expect to recapture House and Senate majorities in 2008, they have much to learn and do in the next 24 months:

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Lesson One: "I was wrong." Those three simple words never came from the lips of any Republican anywhere, and it is one reason so many Republicans were defeated. Voters saw hubris instead of humility, and voting against the GOP was the only way they could send a message of rebuke. The Responsible Republicans of 1994 who engaged their constituents in a mature, meaningful dialogue became the Inept Republicans of 2006 who asserted and demanded but did not listen to the people they served. Sacking Donald Rumsfeld was the White House's way of acknowledging they blew it. Congressional Republicans need to take the same course by replacing those who led the GOP into the wilderness with a new generation of leaders with voices more attuned to the people back home. Voters want a clean sweep. Ignore them at your peril.

Lesson Two: Voters care about the spending of government, not the size. All across America, Republican candidates closed their campaigns with the warning that Democrats would increase government and increase taxes. And all across America, Republicans lost. What Americans wanted from their elected officials was fiscal discipline, accountability, and ethics. But these words simply did not describe a party of bridges to nowhere and congressmen who lined their pockets with cash. In our Election Night poll, we asked voters which issue most annoyed them about the Republican-controlled Congress. Among the Americans who swung from the GOP to the Democrats (Republican Rejecters), "unethical and illegal behavior going unpunished" was number two on the list (behind illegal immigration). For congressional Republicans to return to majority status, they must once again become the guardians of the national interest, the protectors of the purse strings, and the purveyors of honesty. If they don't regain the trust of the people over the next two years, they won't regain Congress.

Lesson Three: Run on reform. Fully 40 percent of the Republican Rejecters and 36 percent of the overall electorate want "significant, bold change in the way America is run." Even 18 percent of Republican congressional voters want a dramatic change in the direction of our country. If congressional Republicans are listening, they will demand new leadership that embraces the cleansing power of reform. Just as the Democratic promise to take America in "a new direction" led them to majority status, congressional Republicans need to set their party off onto a different path—a path toward real, meaningful reform.

Lesson Four: The future *must* be better than the past. The 1994 Contract With America wasn't a political gimmick. It was a clearly articulated agenda that addressed the day-to-day problems and concerns of average Americans. It was tough on spending, tough on taxes, tough on welfare, tough on crime—tough on all the things Americans wanted less of so that they could have more of what they really wanted: freedom and security. Several dozen members begged their leadership to offer a new Republican contract in 2006 because they sensed, correctly, that the party had lost its focus on the future and was interested only in defending the present. The response? Silence. The next leadership team needs to remember that no vision means no votes.

The mood of this country *has* changed since 2004, and because of it, some have already written off Republican chances for recapturing the House and Senate in 2008. The question Americans will be asking is whether Republicans learned anything from this election. The answers will determine the future of the GOP: that of a phoenix or a pariah. ♦

You Gotta Be Purple to Win

How the Democrats did it.

BY JOHN J. DIIULIO JR.

Philadelphia

WRITING IN THESE PAGES just after the 2004 presidential election, I advised my fellow Democrats to start winning and stop whining by wooing America's purple (red-blue) majority. How? By running faith-friendly, pro-life, pro-family, pro-poor candidates. In talks before my fellow political scientists, I predicted that, if Pennsylvania Democrats proved willing to nominate him, and if their liberal national party leadership did not subvert him, then Pennsylvania's state treasurer, Bob Casey Jr., would walk over two-term Republican senator Rick Santorum.

Contributing editor John J. DiIulio Jr. is co-author, with James Q. Wilson, of American Government: Institutions and Policies, *now in its tenth edition. In 2001, he was the first director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.*

It happened in double-digits last Tuesday. Casey bested fellow pro-life ethnic Catholic Santorum 59 percent to 41 percent. The Democrat won every region of the state except the area known as the Central/Northern Tier. In addition to winning by landslides among urban residents, African Americans, union members, young people, unmarried women, and other typically Democratic voters, he also won self-described moderates (65 percent), white Catholics (58 percent), and weekly churchgoers (52 percent). The purple Democrat practically tied "Red Rick" among voters who ranked either "values issues" or "terrorism" as "extremely important," and even made headway among white evangelicals (29 percent).

Santorum's sometimes caustic conservative rhetoric loomed far larger in voters' minds than did his record of thoughtfully articulating

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and tirelessly promoting compassionate, cost-effective social policies and faith-based programs. Late in the campaign, the senator began to sound desperate and slightly disingenuous. Then came his remarkably gracious and public-spirited concession speech, provoking several Democrats with whom I watched it to remark that they might well have voted for "*that* guy." (Stay tuned: Santorum is not yet 50.)

As the Democratic party's national leaders now seem to understand, you can't effectively court a purple-voter majority with faux-purple candidates, or wait to show your purple colors till the election is all but over. Real purple Democrats won even in many states and districts where both the president and Republican incumbents were not as wildly unpopular as they were in Philadelphia and its suburbs. The only Republican House incumbent who survived in true-blue Philly's inner-ring districts, Jim Gerlach, ran ads credibly tagging his challenger, Lois Murphy, as "Liberal Lois," and showing her vamping with Nancy Pelosi, now the national Democrats' House speaker-in-waiting.

Through 2008, President Bush can govern the purple republic without cashiering his deepest convictions about winning the war against terrorism, reforming entitlement programs, and helping people in need through faith-based and community initiatives. The new Congress that convenes in January will have more conservative members, and fewer liberal and far left members, in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle. Attentive purple voters will be listening and watching. If the Democrats' leaders in Congress slip into ultra-liberal attack mode, then they will be rebuked, and the whole party will suffer. But even if congressional Democrats start biting at it, the president should not pull back the bipartisan hand that he ceremoniously and sincerely extended after the election, first to Pelosi, and then to Senate majority leader-in-waiting Harry Reid. If, come what may, the president remains ever the bigger, bipartisan man, then he and the GOP will regain public acclaim, and his legacy will be better too.

President Bush has an opportunity now to govern from the center and center-right, just as he promised he would back in 1999 and 2000, and again after 9/11. To seize it, the president's closest advisers must tune out the partisan, inside-the-beltway blather posing as political analysis, and resist being pulled into backbiting over "Who lost Congress?" Above all, the president himself must *lead* and not let the unmistakable public rebuke of Election 2006 justify lame-ducking it back to Texas.

It won't be easy. Some conservative commentators and ex-Bush insiders who once coronated Karl Rove as a political genius now say Rove was overrated or worse. With perfect hindsight, they intone that Republicans could and should have won more razor-close races.

Love or loathe him, Rove is a master campaign strategist and tactician. But it would have taken magical powers for Republicans to duck this defeat.

Nonsense. Elections are often razor-close. In 1994, when Republicans won 54 House seats, if a grand total of just 19,500 votes had switched from Republican to Democrat across 13 districts, then Democrats would have retained control. Love or loathe him, Rove *is* a master campaign strategist and tactician. But it would have taken magical powers for Republicans to duck this defeat.

As political scientists generally agree, even "nationalized" midterm House elections turn on multiple factors. The short list includes past district vote patterns; past presidential vote patterns; incumbency advantages; candidate quality; changes in real disposable income; presidential approval ratings; and, in off-year contests, the so-called midterm penalty for the president's party. Many months ago, forecasting models variously incorporating these and other variables called the House for the Democrats, with several estimating their net gain at 20 seats or more. That was before the president's approval ratings took new nosedives in many states.

Iraq was the main, but hardly the sole, reason for the president's drag on Republican prospects. As Joe Klein correctly reports in his latest book, *Politics Lost*, from his first days in the campaign business Rove bet that "voters had three basic questions about a candidate: Is he a strong leader? Can I trust him? Does he care about people like me?" Rove bet right in 2000, 2002, 2004, *and* in 2006. But, on all three counts—leadership, trust, compassion—public confidence in Bush's post-Katrina presidency has been dismal. In 2002 and again in 2004, Rove succeeded by "painting the opposition as weak, untrustworthy, and effete."

This time, however, "cut and run" and the rest rang hollow (or worse), even to many registered Republicans. Besides, painting pro-life, ex-military, and law-and-order candidates as "Pelosi Democrats" could stir only the right-wing radio audiences who already believed it. Negative ads apparently worked in Tennessee against Harold Ford Jr., but the final vote margin (50,000) was smaller than analysts had predicted. (Memo to GOP: Read his moving concession and weep. I predict that this purple Democrat, who had challenged Pelosi for the House minority leader's chair, will be back—and won't be beat again.)

As Klein also points out, Bush's compassionate conservatism was sincere, and Rove did his job by framing it as an answer to that one of the three questions that "was always toughest for a Republican," namely, "Does he care about people like me?" But once Bush was elected, translating his special "charge to keep" into new faith-based policies and programs with a

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bipartisan prayer in Congress proved largely impossible. At one extreme, some House Republicans wanted the White House to push for laws that would permit proselytizing with public funds and radically expand religious hiring rights. At the opposite extreme, some House Democrats wanted to repeal the Clinton-era laws that had begun, at least in principle, to prohibit grant-making federal agencies from discriminating against otherwise qualified community-serving religious nonprofit organizations.

Now, however, President Bush can reach back and wrap his original faith-based and community plan around the reelected Senate Democrats, ranging from Hillary Rodham Clinton to Joe Lieberman, who have long supported it, while also inviting in Casey and other natural allies on this issue among the body's new members.

Earlier this fall, Casey gave a speech at Catholic University, "Restoring America's Moral Compass: Leadership and the Common Good," that (but for a few rhetorical rough edges) could almost have been written by Bush's brilliant ex-speechwriter Michael Gerson. All those now responsible for the post-2006 White House "compassion agenda," as well as the president himself, should read it. A typical passage holds that if "we are going to be pro-life, we cannot say we are against abortion of unborn children and then let our children suffer in degraded inner-city schools and broken homes."

Whatever common ground the president finds with the new Democratic majority in Congress on domestic, social, or economic issues, it still won't matter much unless he leaves town in two years having resolved the dilemma in Iraq—resolved it, that is, without having undercut American determination to meet the profound and prolonged global and homeland security challenges posed by international terrorism networks and the nations that support them.

This year, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) made "a new direction" its mantra, and the president's badly bungled Iraq policy its main target. Politically, it worked, but conspicuously absent from the official DCCC to-do list was even so much as an outline regarding Iraq. On Election Night, some DCCC officials made formulaic statements about the war. As always, it's a bad sign when alliterated principles (redeploy, re-this, re-that) are offered instead of policies.

Even after the president announced Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's departure, there had yet to be a meaningful Democratic alternative articulated, apart from calls to withdraw the troops on timetables tethered loosely, if at all, to conditions on the ground and promises to consider practicing whatever the Baker-Hamilton commission preaches. The commission report, due in December, could prove wise and worthy—or not. Bipartisanship is a blessing, but genuine joint legislative-executive debates and policy deliberations are needed, not mutual abdications or government-by-commission.

Bipartisanship on Iraq need not be a pipe dream. A year ago, Delaware's Democratic senator Joseph Biden gave a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, "Turning the Corner on Iraq." Biden declared that the "hard truth is that our large military presence in Iraq is both necessary . . . and increasingly counterproductive." Still, he continued, "Iraqis of all sects want to live in a stable country. . . . And the American people want us to succeed. They want it badly. If the administration listens, if it levels, and if it leads, it can still redeem their faith."

Amen, but only if the Democratic majority in Congress now levels, listens, and honestly helps the president to lead, both at home and abroad, starting with Iraq, will it deserve the public's new-found faith. If not, that faith will soon be fleeting, and many Democrats, purple or not, will lose in 2008, and deservedly so. ♦

Doubling Down in Iraq

Warfare isn't like business.

BY WILLIAM J. STUNTZ

Don't throw good money after bad. When you're in a hole, stop digging. If you've been running in the wrong direction, the first thing to do is, turn around.

These are the kinds of things Americans are hearing and saying about the war in Iraq. It's understandable: Those familiar sayings are often useful. When you gamble and lose, the natural tendency is to double your bet—and when that doesn't work, mortgage everything you have to try to retrieve your losses.

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But as every undergraduate economics student knows, that strategy is a disaster. Hence the principle of "sunk cost." The fact that I've lost a pile on some enterprise or investment is no reason to lose an even bigger pile. The smart move, economically speaking, is to reassess your decisions on a regular basis. When an investment isn't working, get out. Put your money, your talents, and your energy to better use somewhere else.

All of which seems to apply to Iraq, in spades. A seemingly quick and easy military victory has turned sour. The costs, in blood and treasure, have es-

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calated. Victory looks uncertain and distant. It seems the time has come, if not to cut and run, then surely to cut our losses. If ever the principle of sunk cost applied to warfare, it would seem to apply here.

But that instinct is wrong. Warfare is not like investment banking. At precisely the moment an economist might say to stop throwing good money after bad, a wise military strategist might say to double the bet.

Why might that be so? For one thing, willingness to raise the stakes often wins the game. Why do insurgent gangs, who have vastly smaller resources and manpower than the American soldiers they fight, continue to try to kill those soldiers? The answer is, because they believe they only have to kill a few more, and the soldiers will leave. They need not inflict a military defeat (which would be impossible, given the strength of the American military)—all they need to do is survive until American voters decide to throw in the towel, which might happen at any moment.

The proper response to that calculation is to make emphatically clear that the fight will not end until one side or the other wins, decisively. That kind of battle can only have one ending, as Abraham Lincoln understood. In a speech delivered a month after his reelection, Lincoln carefully surveyed the North's resources and manpower and concluded that the nation's wealth was "unexhausted and, as we believe, inexhaustible." Southern soldiers began to desert in droves. Through the long, bloody summer and fall of 1864, the South had hung on only because of the belief that the North might tire of the conflict. But Lincoln did not tire. Instead, he doubled the bet—and won the war.

There is another reason economic logic does not readily apply to the fighting of wars. When running a business, one aims to invest just as much as is necessary to make the sale or manufacture the product—no less, and no more. Profit equals revenue minus cost, so minimizing cost lies at the core of wise business management.

Warfare could not be more different. Send just enough soldiers and guns and tanks to do the job, and you may soon find you have sent too few. The enemy concludes that if it can raise the marginal cost of the conflict just a bit, if casualties are a little higher or the expense a tad greater than you imagined, you'll quit the field. On the other hand, send vastly *more* soldiers and materiel than required to the battlefield, and the enemy soon decides that the fight is hopeless—that, as Lincoln so elegantly put it, our resources are unexhausted and, as we believe, inexhaustible.

In the world of business, decisions are made at the margin: a little more invested here, a bit less there; everywhere, strive to cut waste, to spend no more than is absolutely necessary. In warfare, waste and excess are *productive*: They send the message that victory is inevitable, that whatever resources are needed to obtain it will be given to the task. That is the essence of what military historian Russell Weigley called "the American way of war." Overwhelm the enemy—instead of investing just enough, invest far too much. Make sure the other side knows that our capacity to give and take punishment immeasurably exceeds their capacity to absorb and inflict it.

Donald Rumsfeld tried to run a businesslike war. But warfare is not business; it is not fought at the margin.

The difficulties the Army has experienced in Iraq are due, in large measure, to the fact that the Defense Department forgot this historical lesson. Donald Rumsfeld tried to run a businesslike war. But warfare is not business; it is not fought at the margin. By striving to do just enough to win, we have done too little. The right strategy is to do too much.

That is especially true of a war like the one in Iraq. Consider these data: Between November 2004 and February 2005, according to the Brookings Institution's Iraq Index, the number of coalition soldiers in Iraq rose by 18,000. In that time, the number of Iraqi civilians killed fell by two-thirds, and the number of American troops wounded fell by three-fourths. The soldiers were soon pulled out; by the summer of 2005, American and Iraqi casualties rose again. Later that year, the same thing happened again. Between September and November of 2005, another 23,000 soldiers were deployed in Iraq; once again, both Iraqi and American casualties fell. In the early months of 2006, the number of soldiers fell again, and casualties spiraled up.

The picture is clear: More soldiers mean less violence, hence fewer casualties. The larger the manpower investment in the war, the *smaller* the war's cost, to Iraqis and Americans alike. Iraq is not an unwinnable war: Rather, as the data just cited show, it is a war we have chosen not to win. And the difference between success and failure is not 300,000 more soldiers, as some would have it. One-tenth that number would make a large difference, and has done so in the past. One-sixth would likely prove decisive.

Counterinsurgency warfare is more about protecting than killing—like a nationwide exercise in community policing. And the lesson of the 1990s in American cities is that the best way to reduce the level of criminal violence is to put more cops on the street. The lesson of the past three years in Iraq is the same: If the goal is to cut our losses, the best move is not to pull back, but to dive in—flood the zone, put as many boots as possible on the most violent ground. Do that, and before long, the ground in question will be a good deal less violent.

War is not poker; the stakes in Iraq are much higher than a little money or a few chips. But war's psychology bears some resemblance to a well-played game of cards. The only way Americans lose this war is to fold. That seems likely to be the next move, but it is the last thing we should do. Far better to call and raise. Our cards are better than theirs, if only we have the nerve to play them. ♦

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Istanbul (Not Constantinople)

Don't hold your breath for Turkey to enter the European Union.

By Stephen Schwartz

On October 12, the Swedish Academy announced its award of the Nobel Prize in Literature to the Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk. He is the author of several books that have attained worldwide bestseller status, the most recent in English being last year's *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. The gifted Pamuk is read widely in the West—perhaps even more than in his native country.

Indeed, inside Turkey, political issues almost immediately intruded into discussion of Pamuk's prize, which he will formally accept in Stockholm on December 10. Many in the Turkish cultural elite took a sour view—one symptomatic of aspects of the political culture that threaten to keep their country out of the European Union.

Sophisticated observers might have seen in Pamuk's honor evidence that Turkey has attained a certain cultural parity with other leading countries—surely a favorable sign for the E.U. accession to which so many Turkish citizens aspire. Or they might have construed Pamuk's selection as a cultural gain for Muslims generally. Some in the West pointed out that Pamuk had differed with his country's rulers on several occasions, making him one more in the line of literary dissenters rewarded by the Swedish Academy.

Instead, Turkish political and media circles treated Pamuk's Nobel prize as simply another skirmish in their endless war with the ghosts of Armenians killed on their soil during the First World War. Last year, Turkish authorities charged Pamuk with "public denigration of the Turkish identity"—under a law enacted after his alleged insult occurred. The supposed infraction came in comments made in an interview with the Swiss newspaper *Tages Anzeiger* about historic massacres of Armenians and Kurds by the Turkish authorities. At the beginning of 2006 the legal case was dropped, but only, it seems, as a sop to European sensitivities.

The tragedy suffered by up to a million Armenians at the end of Ottoman rule is not contested by serious historians anywhere, including inside Turkey. Pamuk himself exaggerated when he claimed that "nobody but [him] dares talk about" the subject. A Turkish leftist, Taner Akcam, published a lengthy volume on the atrocities against Armenians, *A Shameful Act*, in Turkish in 1999 (now available in English). But Turkish nationalists labeled Pamuk's prize a European reward for his comments on the Armenian question.

It is easy to assert that Turkey has no place in the E.U. because it is Muslim, and that Europe should define itself by its Christian heritage. But would Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, or an independent Kosovo be eternally excluded from the European Union because they have Muslim majority or plurality populations? Very likely not. The truth is that Turkey is handicapped in its approach to Europe much less by its majority faith than by three aspects of its political culture that mainly reflect the legacy of radical secularism. These are the state ideology of Turkishness, the systematic denial of minority ethnic and religious rights, and the excessive influence of the military within the government.

In addition, to be sure, Turkish politics has taken an Islamist tilt in recent years, with the ascent of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, current prime minister and leader of the AK or Justice and Development party. Although opposed to the petrified and crumbling national-secularist heritage, Erdogan's orientation indicates a path of less, rather than more, speed toward full political reform, including individual and minority rights. Erdogan and his colleagues have made some concessions to the European Union—mainly changes in the legal system (they abolished the death penalty) and gestures toward concil-

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iation on occupied Cyprus—but the AK party's enthusiasm for rapid progress soon faded. The latest assessment from the E.U., published last week, chastised Turkey for dragging its feet on Cyprus as well as on the rights of ethnic and religious minorities.

And it's worse than foot-dragging. Turkey has lost ground. The Turkish Republic has adopted, in the last two years, laws regulating speech and written discourse based on an official definition of Turkishness. Turkishness is defined entirely politically, and with reference to historical events. It is officially "anti-Turkish" to engage in frank discussion of the history of the Anatolian Armenians or, one presumes, the standing of the Greek Orthodox Christians in Turkey, represented by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeus. The visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the ecumenical patriarch scheduled for the end of November seems bound to stir new controversy, for the simple reason that his church has almost no rights in Turkey: It cannot operate a seminary or publish religious literature. This is not the European model of mutual respect between faiths (much less the American model of free exercise of religion).

Minority issues further dramatize the distance between the present Turkish style of governance and European principles. Kurds make up at least a fifth of Turkey's population. They are an Indo-European, not a Turkic, people, and their presence in the region, like that of the Greeks and the Armenians, predates the arrival of the Turks. In Turkey, they have produced a notably nasty bunch of terrorists, including the notorious Abdullah Öcalan of the former Kurdistan Workers party or PKK, an extreme Communist group once aligned with the late Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. But most Kurds are no more radical than their co-ethnics in Iraqi Kurdistan, who are exemplary in their moderation.

But apart from token measures of amelioration adopted to please the Europeans, Turkey continues to deny Kurds the right to enjoy their historical cultural and linguistic traditions. Considering how far Spain has gone in recognizing Catalan, Basque, and other minority-language cultures, and the significant gains by the Scots and Welsh in securing political autonomy in the United Kingdom, Turkey has a long way to go before it will satisfy a European criterion on ethnic minorities.

If the situation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the memory of brutalities inflicted on the Armenians are still provocative topics, the condition of another minority in Turkey, the Alevis, is arguably more dramatic in that they are Muslims. Ethnically both Turkish and Kurdish, the Alevis are Sufi-Shia Muslims and comprise as much as one quarter of the population of the republic, around 18 million people.

The religious traditions and social attitudes of the Alevis illustrate the spiritual diversity of the Islamic global community. While reference volumes, including *The CIA World Fact Book*, routinely cite the official Turkish claim that 99 percent of Turks are Sunnis, Alevis do not follow the established precepts of Sunni Islam. Rather, they honor the 12 imams or religious guides of the main Shia sect. Alevi women do not cover themselves, and they participate equally with men in prayer. Alevis worship "truth" (*hakk*) rather than a divine creator, and they believe truth resides in the hearts of all humans. Their devotion represents a synthesis of Turkic pre-Islamic ecstatic religion, transcendental Sufi practice, and protest against worldly injustice. Like other Shia Muslims, they appear more influenced by contact with Christianity than do Sunnis.

Cruelties inflicted on the Alevis in recent years include an incident of mass murder in the Turkish town of Sivas in 1993, when 37 people died in a hotel set on fire by Sunni extremists. The pretext for this lynching was that an Alevi cultural group was meeting to hear an author, Aziz Nesin, who had defended Salman Rushdie's freedom of the pen. Erdogan's AK party includes no Alevis in its leadership, and Alevis believe the prime minister seeks to exclude them from recognition as Muslims.

Under the Erdogan administration, Alevis fear the rise of a new government-backed, Sunni fundamentalism with strong similarities to the official Wahhabi cult in Saudi Arabia—a shocking possibility in Turkey, where Wahhabis were always despised as enemies of the Ottomans. How could a Wahhabization of Turkish Sunnism take place? With frightening ease: If Erdogan empowers a new state Sunnism, it will expose the inadequacy of religious education and the degraded state of theology in Turkey, a result of the nation's secularist heritage—and a gap in religious culture the Wahhabis will handily fill.

That is the typical Wahhabi response to the revival of Islamic feeling under or after secular rule; the pattern has been seen in Algeria, the Balkans, Central Asia, Nigeria, Malaysia, the Caucasus, and Iraq. In most cases the effort at Wahhabization has failed, but only after serious bloodshed. Turkey would be a most tempting prize for the fundamentalists. In any case, the Alevis seem destined to endure second-class citizenship, if not direct oppression, although they are immensely influential in Turkish cultural (especially musical) life. Turkey is bad, and probably getting worse, for Muslim religious minorities like the Alevis, as well as for the much smaller non-Muslim communities. And as we see in Iraq,

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fighting among Muslims can be bloodier than combat between Muslims and non-Muslims.

As if all these barriers to Turkish-European harmonization were not enough, there remains the enormous problem of the Turkish army. Turkey's armed forces are the sole survivor from an earlier era: They still act as guardian of the official national ideology, rooted in the militant secularism of Kemal Atatürk. Like the People's Liberation Army created by Mao Zedong, which attempted to gain power in the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and '70s, and the former Yugoslav army, for which military professionalism was no bar to involvement in genocidal adventures, the Turkish army has repeatedly asserted the right to intervene in politics and to dismiss Turkey's elected leaders by coup. But while the Chinese army would not attempt such a thing today, and the Serbian remnant of the Yugoslav army no longer has the power to do so, the Turkish army still believes it can flex its muscles when it wishes.

The last ideological military establishment in Western Europe, that of ex-Francoist Spain, was definitively removed from any influence over political life a quarter century ago. But the Turkish army erupted into the civil realm as recently as 1997, when it forced the resignation of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. Erbakan was an Islamist precursor of Erdogan; but military pressure to remove him did not match the European pattern of democratic accountability. Unless Turkey follows Spain's example and completely separates its army from any direct use of political power, it cannot be considered for E.U. accession. In today's Turkey, separation of the army from the state is even more urgent than maintaining the wall between religion and the state. But how can this be accomplished peacefully? There is little indication the Turkish army will not lash back, once again, to keep its privileges.

Americans may have other objections to Turkish policies today, especially in the aftermath of Ankara's refusal to assist in the liberation of Iraq, and the subsequent explosion of anti-American propaganda in the country. But by contemporary European standards, neither the state Atatürk created, with its militaristic secularism, nor the state that threatens to succeed it, with narrow, militant Sunnism as its foundation, would be welcome. Turkey has profound choices to make, and soon—for the good of its citizens no less than for the satisfaction of Brussels bureaucrats, European politicians, and even its past, present, and future American friends. ♦

Michael Ramirez

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Corbis / K.M. Westermann

Gallagher's butcher shop, New York

Here's the beef

The great American appetite for flesh BY VICTORINO MATUS

Despite having spent much of his life in the kitchen, Klaus Fritsch is not a large man.

He is neither rotund like Mario Batali nor in need of a cane like Paul Prudhomme. This is not to say, however, that Klaus is a lousy cook. In the 1970s, he worked at the Playboy Club in Montreal. One day his colleague Arnie Morton entered the kitchen, demanding to know who had made his burger. Klaus took the credit and was told it was the best burger Morton had ever tasted (the secret is tomato juice). The two went into business together and opened the first Morton's steakhouse in Chicago in 1978. I recently met Klaus at the Morton's in downtown Washington. And in the midst of our jovial discussion, I asked him a sensitive question:

You're with a group of friends at a restaurant. One of them orders a steak and tells the waiter he wants it well done. What do you do?

Klaus suddenly sprung from his seat, grabbed my arm, and exclaimed in his thick German accent, "I tell him, you son of a bitch, order a pot roast!" He said he's only joking, but added, "Honestly, if you want a steak well done, I really recommend you get a pot roast. Why ruin a great piece of meat?"

Putting Meat on the American Table
Taste, Technology, Transformation
by Roger Horowitz
Johns Hopkins, 192 pp., $19

Indeed, Americans take their meat very seriously. And despite reports that red meat can lead to heart disease, or that Mad Cow and E. coli contaminations have led to some horrific deaths, we remain undeterred. In the first six months of this year, the Morton's chain generated more than $161 million in revenue. The company now operates 71 restaurants around the world, all with identical menus: Large pieces of prime meat, baked potatoes the size of Nerf footballs, and not a single butter knife to be found.

The concept is quite basic but may well outlast other trendy cuisines such as New American. At least that is Klaus's belief.

"It is over," he declares. "You know, two ounces of fish and two flowers, and on your way home you stop at McDonald's for hamburgers because you're hungry. People figured this out and it was over, so they go back to their steak and potato."

Fritsch considers steak in America to be something ordered on festive occasions: "It goes all the way back to the fatted calf."

Victorino Matus is an assistant managing editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Not that we need to go that far back. In a 1939 essay for the *New Yorker* entitled "All You Can Eat for Five Bucks," Joseph Mitchell chronicled the famous beefsteak dinners thrown by political honchos throughout New York City. Mitchell witnessed one chef "slicing the big steaks with a knife that resembled a cavalry sabre and the other was dipping the slices into a pan of rich, hot sauce. . . . A waiter would go to a table and lay a loaded platter in the middle of it. Hands would reach out and the platter would be emptied. A few minutes later another platter would arrive and eager, greasy hands would reach out again."

Mitchell says that, at beefsteaks, "Waiters are required to keep bringing platters until every gullet is satisfied; on some beefsteak menus there is a notice: '2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc., portions permitted and invited.'"

What needs to be noted is that Mitchell's tales of gluttony came more than 30 years after the publication of *The Jungle* (1906), Upton Sinclair's novel exposing the cruel conditions (for both man and animal) in the Chicago stockyards. Though Sinclair hoped his book would lead to labor reform, the major piece of legislation related to *The Jungle* was the Pure Food and Drug Act. Readers may have been bothered by the hard life of meat cutters, but it seems they were first and foremost concerned with the quality of meat that arrived at their dinner tables. Sinclair was quoted as saying, "I aimed at the public's heart and by accident I hit it in the stomach."

Looking back, this shouldn't surprise us, considering the centrality of beef, poultry, and pork in the American diet. Over the centuries, however, each of these types of meats has taken turns at the top of the list. Roger Horowitz explains why these shifts occurred. Technological innovations such as the gas stove, refrigeration, and cellophane were crucial. Meat companies have also successfully influenced consumer preferences (getting us to love hot dogs) as well as vice versa (getting them to make better bacon).

Until the early 20th century, the predominant choice of meat in America was pork, and largely as a matter of practicality. In its cured form, pork could last through an entire winter—hogs were traditionally slaughtered in late fall. And while the affluent were able to procure ham, poorer Americans managed to get by on salt pork preserved in barrels (hence the term "bottom of the barrel").

By the mid-1800s, most of the processing came to be centered around the Midwest and the Ohio River valley. According to Horowitz, "In the 1860-61 packing season, Cincinnati exported 70 million pounds of cured pork and bacon," earning the city the dubious nickname "Porkopolis." But eventually this shifted to Chicago, thanks in part to the expanding railroads and the entrepreneurship of Philip Danforth Armour, a commodities trader who earned millions selling pork to the Union armies during the Civil War.

Of course, given a choice between fresh pork and fresh beef, Americans have traditionally preferred the latter. But in the pre-refrigeration era, beef did not cure as well as pork. As a result, cattle had to be shipped live from the farms to the cities where the slaughtering would occur. By the 1840s, New York had over 200 slaughterhouses, creating an unsanitary environment. Horowitz notes how the city's board of health decried conditions that "allowed blood and other animal refuse to pool or sink into the soil and give off 'offensive odors.' Further, parts of the animal 'not destined for human consumption' were 'separately disposed of' by 'petty tradesmen' who, by carting these animal parts to their marginal establishments, conveyed the 'sickening stench' of the meat business throughout the city." The slaughterhouses were eventually pushed to the waterfronts on the east and west sides.

But, with advances in refrigeration and refrigerated railcars, beef would eventually surpass pork as America's favorite meat. In 1878, patents for such cars were obtained by former meat market owner Gustavus Swift. Two years later, Swift's beef, also produced in Chicago, was being sold on the East Coast. By 1909, explains Horowitz, "total beef production (including veal) topped pork products for the first time in American history with more than 4 billion pounds of fresh beef leaving the nation's slaughterhouses, a 44 percent increase in ten years." The massive growth in volume also led to more affordable cuts of meat, such as flank and chuck roast. By 1965, says Horowitz, two-thirds of all American families enjoyed at least some amount of steak as part of their annual diet.

Butcher Thomas De Voe is quoted here complaining about "the preference of New York shoppers who 'would rather pay their last dollar for half as much meat in an expensive steak or chop' than purchase inexpensive cuts." That was in 1867, although this sentiment rings true today.

The Department of Agriculture grades beef, from highest to lowest, as prime, choice, select, standard, commercial, utility, cutter, and canner. Most supermarkets now offer choice as the best cut a consumer can purchase. In fact, only 2 percent of U.S. beef is considered prime and is usually found only in restaurants. But on a recent trip to the mammoth Wegmans supermarket in Rochester, I discovered prime dry-aged ribeyes in the meat department's display case. They were selling for $21.99 per pound.

Butcher Bill Gamer says his primes sell well: "No one really asks how much," he told me. "They just buy them. During the holidays, customers will pick up eight or nine [steaks], no problem." Gamer comes from a family of butchers and fits perfectly Joseph Mitchell's description of a "well-nourished man." He added that New York strips sell the most at this particular Wegmans, though his favorite cut is the ribeye.

"Just look at the fat on it," he said with an approving grin.

Less popular than either beef or pork throughout the 19th, and part of the 20th, century was chicken. Until the late 1960s and early '70s, most chickens were sold whole, posing a problem: Either families were too large, so the chicken was consumed too quickly, or families were too small and spent the rest of the week bored out of

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their wits trying to finish the bird. This all changed largely because of the industry's pioneers, Maryland farmer Frank Perdue and John and Don Tyson, a father-and-son team from Arkansas.

Perdue followed the path of Oscar Meyer by name-branding his birds. The Tysons, particularly Don, innovated "market differentiation," selling different parts to different people at different prices. When the McDonald's Corporation unveiled the Chicken McNugget nationwide in 1983, Tyson became the chief supplier. Perdue, meanwhile, achieved success by understanding consumer preferences such as yellow-hued chickens, adding marigold petal extract to the feed.

"[Perdue] tapped into the way consumers rely on visual signifiers to evaluate meat's quality," writes Horowitz. "For consumers, the yellow in chickens was like the red in freshly cut beef, an ineffable feature testifying, in some intrinsic way, to the product's wholesomeness and value." By 2002, "Americans ate 83 pounds of chicken annually, significantly more than their beef consumption."

While the chicken industry hasn't had to worry about the impact of Mad Cow Disease, it has had its share of headaches due to salmonella and, now, avian flu. Nevertheless, consumption of chicken has continued unabated, and even risen. During the early 1990s, Horowitz points out that "when stories of chicken contamination saturated the news media, per capita consumption increased almost 15 percent to 69 pounds annually" and, as such, "consumers seemed to respond to exposés . . . by being more careful in their handling and cooking of chicken, rather than changing their eating habits." The reaction is similar to the public response to *The Jungle*.

In the spirit of Sinclair's novel, the 2001 bestselling *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* by Eric Schlosser also aimed to change our diets and affect the industry by describing in graphic detail modern-day meat processing and the dangers posed to both meat workers and consumers. Schlosser's book is truly compelling, and his vivid account from inside a slaughterhouse, as well as his detailing of the effects of E. coli on children, require the reader to take pauses for deep breaths.

This month, the movie version of *Fast Food Nation* will be in theaters across the country (the film is fictionalized, though the company in question is called "Mickey's"). Manohla Dargis of the *New York Times* has already called it "the most essential political film from an American director since Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*"—though even he acknowledges "it may not turn you into a vegetarian." In other words, we may be appalled at various aspects of the industry, but at the end of the day, we will not be deterred from ordering a medium-rare cajun ribeye.

Philip Danforth Armour

Corbis

"Meat remains a sign of the good life, the American life, and a valued item in our diets," says Roger Horowitz, "even as Americans remain skittish about the wholesomeness of our food system." To a certain degree, our continued willingness to eat meat will also be tied to our accepting what it is that has been slaughtered.

"One way to horrify at least eight out of ten Anglo-Saxons is to suggest their eating anything but the actual red fibrous meat of a beast," writes M.F.K. Fisher in *How To Cook a Wolf*. She goes on to describe her first encounter with *tête de veau*:

> The main trouble, perhaps, was that it was not a veal's head at all, but half a veal's head. There was the half-tongue, lolling stiffly from the neat half-mouth. There was the one eye, closed in a savory wink. There was the lone ear, lopped loose and faintly pink over the odd wrinkles of the demi-forehead. And there, by the single pallid nostril, were three stiff white hairs.
>
> At first I thought the world was too much with me, and wondered how gracefully I could leave it. Then what I am sure was my good angel made me stay, and eat, and finally ask for more.

America's passion for meat is enduring—albeit peculiar. Sometimes we are disturbed by what we eat, though the industry is quickly adapting: Whole Foods Market (aka "Whole Paycheck") will soon be selling meat with the label "animal compassionate" to assure us the cow was treated well. Until it was butchered, that is. At other times, our appetite for meat seems insatiable. As I concluded my interview with Klaus Fritsch of Morton's, I couldn't resist asking him about the largest piece of meat his restaurant ever served. It was a whole strip loin weighing 10 pounds. As a gimmick, it was served to former Chicago Bears defensive tackle William "The Refrigerator" Perry, who at the time was working for Sears.

Alas, Perry only managed to eat half the loin. But even worse, lamented Fritsch, "the guy ordered it medium-well." ♦

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A Jewish Heroine

There's more to Emma Lazarus than the Statue of Liberty. **BY ABBY WISSE SCHACHTER**

Bettmann / Corbis

Ask a random sampling of people to identify Emma Lazarus, and chances are you'll hear that she wrote the poem at the base of the Statue of Liberty. (That is, if you get any responses beside blank stares.) Ask the same group who Anne Frank was and you'll get a lot more information.

The fame and hero worship of Frank, compared with the near complete ignorance of Lazarus, came home to poet Esther Schor at a recent pageant at her daughter's school. The students were dressed in costumes for an annual Wax Museum, as Schor recounts, all representing the theme "People Who Made a Difference." Among Leonardo da Vinci, George Washington, and Malcolm X, Schor found that three different Jewish girls had dressed as Anne Frank. No one had chosen Emma Lazarus.

Emma Lazarus
by Esther Schor
Schocken, 368 pp., $21.95

As Schor makes clear in the prologue of her new biography, this book is a response to those three Anne Franks. Yes, she, too, was given *Diary of a Young Girl* when she was young, and yes, she, too, found in it a heroine she loved and admired. But Schor admits that Frank was her heroine for the wrong reasons: "I loved Anne Frank neither for hoping nor dying but for being so shameless, so unlovable."

With *Emma Lazarus*, Schor is trying to show us a different Jewish heroine. "A woman of action," Schor writes, "a secular, nationalist Jew; a spinster with a sharp eye for sexual innuendo, unafraid to face her own longings." Indeed, as Schor proves, Emma Lazarus should finally take her place and be celebrated as one of the great heroines of Jewish history.

Abby Wisse Schachter is an editor at the New York Post.

Born in 1849 in New York, to a well-established and wealthy Sephardic family, Emma was the fourth child of Moses and Esther Lazarus, and at least a fourth-generation American Jew. The Lazaruses were firmly part of the New York Jewish establishment, while their relationship to Judaism was quintessentially American: They kept a selection of Jewish edicts, but not all, and among the extended Lazarus family they were less active members of their synagogue, Temple Emanu-El.

It might have been predictable had Lazarus turned out to be more poet than Jew; but far from being assimilated or unaffiliated, Lazarus was, instead, a firebrand for Jewish causes and used her writing talents to withering effect when it came to challenging anti-Semitism. In her 1880 poem "Raschi in Prague," she hit a theme she would return to more than once; Jews are the way they are because of Christian persecution. As Raschi declares in the poem, the Jews

are what ye have made
If any among them be fawning, false,
Insatiable, revengeful, ignorant, mean—
And there are many such—ask your own hearts
What virtues ye would yield for planted hate,
Ribald contempt, forced, menial servitude,
Slow centuries of vengeance for a crime
Ye never did commit?

As Lazarus explained it to Ellen Emerson, daughter of Ralph Waldo Emerson, she considered herself a "new world Jew: Progressive, unencumbered by ancient laws and customs, and free to move unabashed in a wider, American world." Her passions for both America and the fate of the Jewish people would be a source of pride and trouble for Lazarus throughout her career.

Her greatest Jewish awakening and the reason she championed the cause of immigration—leading her to write "The New Colossus"—was the influx of Russian Jewish exiles in the early 1880s. She visited the refugees who fled Russian pogroms on March 26, 1882, the Jewish festival of Purim. As she wrote in an unsigned dispatch for the *New York Times*,

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Never before were the prayer of gratitude and the impulse of joy more genuine, more appropriate and more solemn than on this day of March (Adar) 1882, when after a new exodus, and a new persecution by the seed of Haman, these stalwart young representatives of the oldest civilization in existence met to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land.

Emma Lazarus became one of New York's more ardent advocates for saving the Jews. She favored immigration to the United States and encouraged other Americans to embrace her view. She even invoked some of the imagery that would make her famous years later: "Every American must feel a thrill of pride and gratitude in the thought that his country is the refuge of the oppressed," she wrote in 1882, "the 'home of hope to the whole human race,' and however wretched be the material offered to him from the refuse of other nations, he accepts it with generous hospitality."

Lazarus also endorsed the idea of a nationalist solution to the Jewish problem: a Jewish state. As an early advocate of what would become Zionism, she was ahead of most American Jews, and was criticized for it. She began a weekly column in the *American Hebrew* that took up her new "dogma," the need for a new Jewish state in Palestine. As Schor explains, neither her fellow Jews nor a wider Christian audience were receptive to the idea.

But she wasn't all polemics. Lazarus also had a terrific sense of humor, as illustrated by a comment written from London, to a friend regarding her still being single at the advanced age of 33. "I am bitterly disappointed," she wrote, "in not seeing the slightest prospect of marrying Sir Moses Montefiore—as I had hoped. He is approaching his 99th birthday & has not made any advances to me & I fear there is no time to be lost."

This volume is part of a series called "Jewish Encounters," and that's just what it is. It's an encounter with a passionate, stubborn, jocular Jewish American heroine. Schor wants us to "get to know" Emma Lazarus, and with this volume, we can and we should. ♦

Tangled Web

The law of the jungle does not apply.

BY MARC F. PLATTNER

The advent of the Internet has undoubtedly affected many aspects of our lives: Work, learning, shopping, political campaigns, friendship, even relations between the sexes. Its impact may someday come to be seen as even more significant than that of the telephone or the automobile. But during the 1990s, an era of political innocence and the dotcom boom, many Internet enthusiasts believed it would bring about far greater changes—nothing less than the transformation of human communities. By enabling people all over the world to connect directly with one another, it would strengthen individuals and civil society, weaken the power of governments, render national borders irrelevant, and make the territorial state obsolete.

Who Controls the Internet?
Illusions of a Borderless World
by Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu
Oxford, 240 pp., $28

A decade later, it is clear that these Internet Utopians had fallen victim to "illusions of a borderless world"—the subtitle of this wonderful new book by law professors Jack Goldsmith of Harvard and Tim Wu of Columbia. In a splendidly readable volume that bears absolutely no resemblance either to a law review article or a techie manual, they tell the story of the Internet's early days, the colorful characters who imagined and sought to guide its future, and the political realities that are ultimately "domesticating" it. These political realities, moreover, include not just the censorship imposed by dictatorial governments, such as those in China and Saudi Arabia, but the actions of democratic states as well.

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In fact, Goldsmith and Wu open their story with the attempt of a French court in 2000 to prevent Yahoo from allowing Nazi memorabilia featured on its auction site to be visited by French web surfers, in violation of a French ban on trafficking in Nazi goods. Initially, Yahoo responded that French law had no authority over what material was put on computer servers outside French jurisdiction, that the laws of one nation should not force Yahoo to change its worldwide content, and that it would be impossible for Yahoo to identify and filter out French visitors to its websites.

But the judge, after appointing a team of Internet experts to investigate the matter, concluded that available technology would, indeed, allow Yahoo to screen out most of its French users, and threatened to impose heavy fines if this were not done. Realizing that the assets of its French subsidiary were vulnerable to seizure, and that its executives would be subject to legal processes if they traveled to France, Yahoo yielded and withdrew the Nazi materials from its auction sites.

A crucial lesson that Goldsmith and Wu drive home is that cyberspace is not a truly independent realm, inasmuch as it always remains dependent on hardware that exists in real places somewhere on the globe and is, therefore, within the reach of governments.

One attempt to get around this fact was the establishment of a "data haven" on an abandoned concrete platform in the North Sea that the British had used to fire on German bombers during World War II. In 1966 it was taken over by a retired British Army major who

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named it Sealand and declared its independence from the United Kingdom. In 1999 he allowed an Internet entrepreneur to set up a bank of servers and "to rent computer space to anyone who wanted to escape the clutches of government"—especially web gambling operations and pornographers.

But as Goldsmith and Wu recount, the project failed, not because other governments invaded Sealand, but because they were able to put pressure on the intermediaries that are essential to doing business on the web. The authors show how local Internet service providers, search engine companies, credit card companies, and banks all may come within the reach of national laws whose enforcement, even if erratic, makes it unprofitable for these intermediaries to violate them.

Goldsmith and Wu also address the governance question that lends their book its title. The key point of control over the structure of the Internet is what is called "root authority"—the power to award (and to revoke) Internet addresses. Although the Internet was initially developed by engineers working under Defense Department contracts, for many years the U.S. government played a passive role, allowing the inventors of the Internet to exercise root authority.

During the 1990s, however, as the commercial prospects of the Internet became evident, disputes over the locus of control began to emerge. In 1997, the Internet Society, a private group composed largely of Internet founders, launched an effort (in collaboration with the International Telecommunications Union, a specialized U.N. agency) to take control of Internet policy for itself and various affiliated entities. But the U.S. government had other ideas, and it successfully reasserted its own ultimate claim to root authority.

The point man for the American effort was none other than Ira Magaziner, President Clinton's Oxford buddy who had been appointed "Internet czar" after working with Hillary Clinton on the administration's failed health care project. The United States subsequently turned over the administration of this area to a private international body, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). According to Goldsmith and Wu, however, ICANN remains under contract to the Department of Commerce, which has no intention of relinquishing America's root authority, despite complaints from other governments.

It seems clear, then, that even in so globalized and elusive a realm as cyberspace, the nation-state remains the key player. The notion of a "borderless world" turns out to be little more than hi-tech utopianism. But Goldsmith and Wu go beyond simply cautioning that the "territorial state" is alive and kicking and can be ignored only at our peril. They are fully cognizant of the damage that not only dictatorial but also democratic states can do to the Internet through heavy-handed or misguided intervention. Yet they insist that the state supplies positive goods—even for Internet communities—that cannot be obtained from any other source. In important ways, they contend, it is a good thing that, instead of a borderless world, we are moving toward a "bordered Internet."

The main reason Internet content is increasingly becoming divided along geographical lines is not the strong arm of national law but the desire of Internet users to receive material that responds to their own needs and tastes.

The most important factor here is language. Contrary to predictions that English would be the overwhelmingly dominant language of the Internet, its share has been steadily declining: "In the late 1990s," write Goldsmith and Wu, "80 percent of online information was in English. By the end of 2002, less than 50 percent of the pages on the World Wide Web were in English." And there is every sign that this trend will continue. Moreover, as is true of any other medium, people want the information conveyed by the Internet tailored to their own interests, and these interests continue to be determined, to a considerable extent, by the place where they live.

But the advantages of a bordered Internet are not limited to its ability to respond more efficiently to diversity among nations. Goldsmith and Wu illustrate the contribution of lawful national government by telling the story of the evolution of eBay. In its early days this web auction site operated as a "virtual community," with self-policing by a "Feedback Forum" that praised honest participants and sought to shame abusive ones, as well as informal dispute resolution by a kindly figure known as "Uncle Griff."

As eBay grew, however, and became phenomenally successful, it also attracted users bent on large-scale fraud. It found itself forced to respond by hiring law-enforcement professionals, and by 2005 its full-time security staff reached 800. What is more, eBay called upon Congress to "send a message to cyber criminals throughout the world that the U.S. government can and will protect e-commerce from criminal activity." More broadly still, Goldsmith and Wu argue, eBay's successful operation depends upon the enforceability of contracts, which only government can effectively ensure.

The short history of the Internet gives us a crash course in understanding why anarchy cannot work. For the same reason, we should not expect some form of "global governance" to readily and benignly supersede the nation-state. The champions of globalization typically do not call for the abolition of the nation-state, but relegate it to the position of "just one source of order among many." Responding to this view, Goldsmith and Wu acknowledge that most people's daily lives are more influenced by social norms and markets than by law.

The key question, they assert, "is whether such sources of rules and governance can function apart from an underlying system of territorial government and physical coercion." And the answer given by their book is a resounding *No*. They have succeeded not only in writing a fascinating account of the development of the Internet, but in illuminating the fundamental character of the world in which we live. ♦

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Constable Country

England's liberator of the landscape.

BY JOSEPH PHELAN

Last year, when the BBC asked listeners to vote on the greatest painting in Britain, the winner was Joseph Mallord William Turner's "The Fighting Temeraire," followed closely by John Constable's "The Haywain." These results came as no surprise since these two artists, rivals born within a year of each other, were linked together in their lifetimes and ever since. Turner's bravura creations in oils or watercolors are showstoppers wherever they are displayed, while Constable's quiet idyllic scenes of the countryside have come to typify all that is best about England for the English.

Constable's Great Landscape
The Six-Foot Paintings
National Gallery of Art,
October 1-December 31, 2006
The Huntington Library,
February 3-April 29, 2007

Here in America, despite having some of Constable's best work in collections from Connecticut to California, the average museum-goer is much less familiar with him than with the Romantic Delacroix, our own Hudson River School, or the great Impressionists Monet and Pissarro, all of whom were influenced by Constable to one degree or another. The National Gallery of Art, which has already offered focused surveys of artists who established or enlarged the standards of great painting—in their exhibitions "Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and The Renaissance of Venetian Painting" and "Cézanne in Provence"—now presents a show devoted to the crowning achievements of one of England's premier artists.

The exhibit follows a chronological path, which is essential with an artist like Constable, who believed that "painting is but another name for feeling." Walking through it is like reading Constable's autobiography. A small self-portrait opens the show. We see a handsome young man with a confident look, large aquiline nose, firm chin, and long sideburns who might have stepped out of a Jane Austen novel. Rather than looking at the viewer, Constable is gazing in the direction of his first paintings of East Bergholt in the Stour River Valley. (Located in Suffolk in the southeast of England, this was the region where the painter grew up, and which would come to be known as "Constable Country.") Constable's father, Golding, was a prominent coal and grain merchant who owned many of the mills along the river which his son was to paint. While Golding expected that the younger man would follow in the family business, he did not oppose John's decision to become an artist.

To be a serious painter at the turn of the 19th century meant going to London to study at the Royal Academy, which Constable entered in 1799. There never seemed any question in the young man's mind that he would be a landscape painter, and he soon was learning to paint in accordance with the pastoral conventions laid out by the 17th-century masters of landscape, Claude Lorrain, Peter Paul Rubens, and Jacob van Ruisdael.

Yet early in Constable's career we see the temperamental and nonconformist artist bridling at having to learn solely from conventional artistic practices, and vowing that in his case, Nature would be his ultimate teacher.

"For these past two years," he wrote, "I have been running after pictures and seeking the truth at second hand. I have . . . endeavored to make my performance look as if really executed by other men."

In 1802 Constable declared his artistic independence: "I shall shortly return to Bergholt where I shall make some laborious sketches from nature. . . . There is room enough for a natural painter." In these words we have a clear expression of the Romantic notion that the true artist must possess an original vision, yet at the same time this vision must be grounded in the study of nature. One of the first results of this conviction is the National Gallery's own "Wivenhoe Park, Essex," a panoramic view of a friend's estate. Constable painted most of it outdoors, which was unusual for the time. The work has both the finely executed brushwork and careful arrangement of details, which Constable learned from his teachers. But this is not a conventional work, as you can see by studying the different shades of green Constable employs for the trees and the level of specificity he gives to the details. The clouds, which we see scudding across the sky, cast long shadows on the countryside, making the radiance of the day even more beautiful. Here we have the beginnings of one of Constable's greatest insights: That nature never stands still, and the painter who would capture it must learn to show its movement.

In 1809, Constable fell in love with Maria Bicknell, courting her against the opposition of her family until they finally married seven years later. The couple settled in London, where Constable had a studio. It was then that the painter determined to achieve greater recognition (and charge higher prices) by painting works on the same large scale that Turner was doing, but without "the great vice of the present day . . . bravura, an attempt at something beyond the truth."

Walk into the next gallery and look at the first of these large canvases, "The White Horse." Here is a simple narrative of a tow horse being ferried

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'The Haywain,' 1821

Corbis / National Gallery Collection, by kind permission of the Trustees of the National Gallery, London

from one bank of the river to another on a serene summer day. Although painted completely in his London studio, based on sketches he made a few years earlier, the work is evocative of the lush, precise, and emotionally charged details that Constable loved. Yet it gave Constable no end of trouble, so much so that, out of fear of failure, he said his prayers before it every night.

Constable needed to make his paintings attract more attention, both at first glance and at a distance. In order to work out his composition on a large scale, and at the same time keep it fresh and vital, he believed a full-scale sketch was necessary. When it was exhibited the following spring, "The White Horse" was greeted with more praise than Constable had ever received, and the Royal Academy elected him as an associate member. Over the next decade he produced a half-dozen works which he called his "six footers," each beginning life as full-scale sketch.

Here it ought to be said that this is the first time these full-size sketches and the finished paintings have been brought together in an exhibition, and that it is highly unlikely they will be so assembled again. Curator Franklin Kelly has hung each sketch next to its finished version, allowing an unprecedented look into the early stage of an artistic idea. The sheer painterly pleasure that Constable took in his method is clearly evident, and since the parts of the sketches frequently clamor and shout for our separate attention, we can better appreciate the dramatic unity which he imposed on the finished work.

The central picture in the series, and Constable's most famous painting, is "The Haywain," a picture of a hay cart crossing a ford, which owes something to Rubens's "View of Het Steen in the Early Morning" in London's National Gallery. This was a painting Constable greatly admired for the "joyous and animated character" Rubens imparted to the sky, filling it with departing showers and rainbows. Constable recreated the area around Flatford Mill, which was his father's first home and the place where Constable's siblings were born. The house that figures so prominently in this and other works had earlier belonged to a man who lived his entire seventy years in Flatford. Clearly a metaphor for the tradition and continuity to which Constable was extremely sensitive, this, like all his best work, is rooted in the emotional associations of his "careless boyhood."

The serene mood of these early works gives way in "The Leaping Horse" to a powerful, dramatic image of a boy on a horse struggling to jump over a barrier, making it the pictorial and emotional climax of the entire series. By using a low viewpoint, he made the horse and rider seem almost monumental, recalling the noble tradition of equestrian portraits by Titian, Rembrandt, and Velazquez. Despite his aversion to bravura painting, the drama here comes, in part, from its dynamic handling. Many areas are worked out roughly with a palette knife.

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Toward the end of the series, Constable realized the need to develop other subjects. When Maria Constable became ill, the family summered at Brighton for the sea air. Constable was moved by the magnificence of the sea, but he also found the whole resort depressing. Both of these emotions are reflected in "Chain Pier, Brighton," which depicts the remains of the old fishing village in the foreground, juxtaposed with luxury resort hotels rising in the distance, all under an overwhelmingly stormy sky. The most moving of the late paintings, "Hadleigh Castle," a picture of medieval ruin overlooking the Thames, is a homage to Constable's recently deceased wife. He had been to this site only once, in 1814, during their difficult courtship period, and in a letter to Maria, he mentions the "melancholy grandeur" of the view. With its crumbling ruins and bleak overcast sky, this is the most obviously Romantic of all Constable's paintings, but the artist has earned his right to paint it: This was the work that resulted in his full appointment to the Academy.

Constable's intention was to bring the truth of nature and the truth of the heart closer together than any painter before him. By juxtaposing the sketches with the finished works, this extraordinary exhibit illuminates how Constable liberated landscape painting from the leaden conventions and restrictive traditions under which it had labored. Henceforth, landscape painting could serve as a vehicle for the expression of the powerful feelings, the sentiments and moods of modern life. Here is a painter who deserves to be considered with the late Titian, with Velazquez, and with Rembrandt, as one of those masters who invests oils with life-enhancing emotion. ♦

Not-So-Grand Hotel

Robert Kennedy's assassination, as seen by his concierge. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

Friends, if you love the powerful drama and riveting excitement of a hotel lobby, then—have I got a movie for you. About 45 minutes of the new ensemble drama *Bobby* takes place in just such a lobby and its immediate environs. Among the heart-stopping thrills: Retired doorman Anthony Hopkins plays chess with retired bellhop Harry Belafonte. Hotel manager William H. Macy stops by to offer friendly advice on how to move a rook before saying hello to his wife Sharon Stone, who runs the beauty parlor. Behind a door in an office sits Heather Graham, the world's most beautiful switchboard operator, who's sleeping with William H. Macy. Back in the kitchen, chef Laurence Fishburne makes the most delicious blueberry cobbler you ever ate. He gives some cobbler to, and gets Dodgers tickets from, a nice Mexican busboy who is being forced to work late by the vicious, racist food-service director, Christian Slater.

Bobby
Directed by Emilio Estevez

Also taking a stroll through on their way to the tennis court: married couple Martin Sheen and Helen Hunt. He's a depressed stockbroker, and she doesn't have the right shoes. In the wedding chapel, starlet Lindsay Lohan is a teenager who's decided to get married to Elijah (Frodo) Wood. Meanwhile, over by the nightclub, songstress Demi Moore is boozing it up while her long-suffering husband Emilio Estevez suffers long.

Then, in the last six minutes, five of these people get shot. For *Bobby* is not set in just any hotel lobby. No, this is the lobby of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles—the very real place where Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated on June 5, 1968. The five victims are innocent bystanders hit by bullets from Sirhan Sirhan's gun. Writer-director Emilio Estevez made a mystifying dramatic choice: To tell a story about the RFK assassination that's not about the RFK assassination, but rather about a bunch of extremely dull people who happened to be in the vicinity. This is probably no surprise, given that, in his career as both actor and filmmaker, Estevez has spent two decades giving new meaning to the word "pedestrian."

Throughout the day at the Ambassador Hotel, we see RFK's advance team making ready for the big victory party they're going to have later on in the evening, when Kennedy wins the California primary. Two campaign workers joke about which cabinet posts they're going to get. Two campaign volunteers slough off and drop acid in a room upstairs with Ashton Kutcher, who appears to be wearing a hippie outfit purchased in a Wal-Mart Halloween display. And a Czech journalist hangs around, hoping for an interview.

Kennedy is shown only in contemporary film clips (on two occasions, we are shown the back of Kennedy's head). There's a great deal of talk about how he is certain to be the next president of the United States, and about the great hope he has given to the poor and the meek and the struggling and the black and the white and the brown.

But what's interesting is that the clips we're shown, which are intended to display RFK as a secular saint, reveal only that he was exactly the same sort of politician we just saw in the hundreds across the country during the recent election season. He's shown talking to children in awkward terms about the environment, using the "despair" of Americans in the

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industrial belt as a backdrop for a picturesque campaign appearance, expressing sorrow over the racial divide, and criticizing an unpopular war. The only surprising element is that, speaking extemporaneously, it appears his grammar was poor enough to make George W. Bush seem like Strunk, or maybe even White.

Thus, if you don't come to the theater already disposed to believe Bobby Kennedy was destined to convert this troubled country into a utopia of egalitarian brotherhood, you may find it difficult to understand the reverential sentimentality with which the movie's characters discuss RFK. Or why so many liberals have felt for the past 38 years that the killing of Robert F. Kennedy was the hinge moment in history that set America on the course to an evil conservative future. It's not just the bad grammar that's Bush-like; every word out of Kennedy's mouth sounds like nothing so much as "compassionate conservatism."

Bobby's broad brush evocation of the 1960s—makeup, clothing, interior decorating—always offers something entertaining to look at. The go-go hair extensions on the female performers are amusing; Demi Moore hits the stage with a half-decomposed Brillo Pad on her head as she warbles "Louie Louie." And some of the acting is excellent, especially Sharon Stone's.

The movie ends with a scene of the carnage in the kitchen of the Ambassador where Kennedy was shot, along with those five bystanders. (None of the characters shot in the movie is based on a real-life victim.) The only sound we hear is a gorgeously eloquent Kennedy speech bemoaning the violence in America and how terrible it is that we commit violence against each other. Kennedy, the movie is saying, was such a prophet that he prophesied his own death.

Only that's not the story of his death. Kennedy was not killed in a random act of American-on-American violence. Sirhan Sirhan is a Palestinian, and the assassination was an overtly political act—Sirhan's own contemporaneous diary entries demonstrate he wanted Kennedy dead because he thought RFK was too friendly to Israel. The Kennedy assassination was the first act of Arab terrorism on American soil.

But who cares about all that when there's a ripping chess game going on in the lobby? Pawn to queen's bishop three! ♦

Vive le Califat

Does European Islam mean Islamic Europe?

BY JEREMY RABKIN

It's human nature to recoil from the saddest or most distressing sights. If there's another side of us that is fascinated by disaster, there are lots of disaster stories competing for attention. Cable news and the Internet make it all too easy to switch over or click on to the latest breaking tale of woe. To keep us focused on the most alarming underlying trends, we need a really entertaining writer.

America Alone
The End of the World as We Know It
by Mark Steyn
Regnery, 256 pp., $27.95

So here's Mark Steyn, with all his trademarked verbal slapstick and clowning. And his new book is intensely sobering. Most of it has been said before—and by no one more insistently than Steyn himself in his regular columns in America, Canada, and Britain. But with the space now to keep spinning out the implications, Steyn offers a warning that is riveting.

The challenge starts with demographic trends. European birthrates have fallen way below replacement levels. In today's Italy, for example, there are barely half as many children under the age of five as there were in 1970. As the proportion of old people increases and the proportion of young workers declines, European welfare states face financial strains that make our own problems with Social Security look mild and manageable.

Immigration, once seen as an answer to this problem, now poses an even more intense challenge in much of Europe. Immigrants from Muslim countries have maintained high birthrates and concentrated in major cities, so large parts of major cities are now preserves of immigrant cultures. Complacent talk of multiculturalism has allowed European governments to ignore the challenge of winning the loyalties and attachments of immigrants. For children of immigrants, who have no strong attachments either to their old or new countries, extremist ideology often fills the void.

In practice, Steyn warns, Europe is trending toward societies that are not so much multicultural as bicultural—split between a growing minority that embraces Muslim discipline and identity, and a bewildered, anxious, aging population that does not. Bicultural societies are rarely stable.

Europeans scoff at the idea that Iraq could become a pluralist democracy, but then imagine that European social democracy can ensure happy harmony with people fired by some of the same zeal as Iraqi "insurgents."

> You think Kurds and Arabs, Sunni and Shia are incompatible? What do you call a jurisdiction split between post-Christian secular gay potheads and anti-whoring anti-sodomite anti-everything-you-dig Islamists? If Kurdistan's an awkward fit in Iraq,

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how well does Pornostan fit in the Islamic Republic of Holland?

Sure, Western decadence has an appeal, even for children of Algerian immigrants in the *banlieux* of Paris. But restless young people may well combine the worst aspects of Western decadence with the worst impulses of Islamist extremism: "Whether in turbans or gangsta threads, just as Communism was in its day, so Islam is today's identity of choice for the world's disaffected."

A reform of Islam? "What if the reform has already taken place and jihadism is it?" Steyn puts the challenge very sharply: "Those who call for a Muslim reformation in the spirit of the Christian Reformation ignore the obvious flaw in the analogy—that Muslims have the advantage of knowing (unlike Luther and Calvin) where reform in Europe ultimately led: the banishment of God to the margins of society."

In some places, gradual but relentless accommodation to the new culture will steer societies along a path where "there's very little difference between living under Exquisitely Refined Multicultural Sensitivity and sharia." Elsewhere, there may be resistance, triggering street violence or political upheaval. Amidst worsening economic trends and increasing instability, more and more educated young people will seek their futures in more promising countries—hastening the dissolution of the old society. So Steyn foresees "societal collapse, fascist revivalism, and then the long Eurabian night, not over the entire Continent but over significant parts of it. And those countries that manage to escape the darkness will do so only after violent convulsions of their own."

Even if that nightmarish vision is too extreme, the strategic point remains: No matter what rhetoric our State Department adopts, European nations are not going to be confident, capable partners for American international aims. Would France help us thwart the nuclear plans of the mullahs in Tehran? The "quai d'Orsay can live with Iran becoming the second Muslim nuclear power. As things stand, France is on course to be the third."

Steyn still expresses hope for the effort in Iraq, and not just as a way of emphasizing the hopelessness of coming conflicts in Europe. In many Muslim countries, people may think about their own future more soberly or reasonably, because they're not viewing things through the perspective of mounting conflict with hedonists across town. Meanwhile, Russia, China, and Japan face their own demographic crises. The utter incapacity of international institutions will discourage smaller countries from thinking about anything more than their own immediate interests. So on Steyn's telling, we are heading to an era of ongoing crisis, an era when the world cannot bring itself even to constrain the spread of weapons of mass destruction, much less focus concentrated condemnation on such "depravities" as suicide bombing.

AFP / Getty Images / Fred Dufour

Montfermeil, France, June 30, 2006

The United States really will be "alone" in fundamental ways. It is the one nation in the developed world that is not facing demographic decline, the one nation for which the challenge of Islamist extremism remains largely external. What is out there, of course, can come crashing into the heart of American cities as it did on 9/11. And meanwhile, we continue pouring billions of petrodollars into the coffers of Middle Eastern regimes that still seem content to recycle that immense stream of wealth into extremist religion in Europe and around the world.

Steyn offers little in the way of policy prescriptions. He argues that American self-confidence owes much to our tradition of keeping government in bounds and encouraging the self-reliance of individuals. So he ends up warning that proposals for emulating European welfare states—as in extending government guarantees for health care—will have momentous strategic consequences. Maybe. But I'm not sure invoking the imperatives of national defense in every debate about domestic spending or regulation is really a good way to get people to take defense concerns more seriously.

Steyn's main point remains. The collapse of existing political structures in Europe will require not just a reassessment of strategic calculations—NATO and all that. It will require a very considerable psychological adjustment. A calm and reasonable future is not, after all, guaranteed by the advance of technology, by the expansion of trade, or by the softening of old ideologies in the advanced countries.

The threat is not that a new caliphate will rule the world, but that the world will revert to medieval chaos and wretchedness. The United States certainly can't expect to restore the world as it was in the 1990s, but it also can't pretend that everything will be fine if we let history take its own path. We may find unexpected allies, including some in those Muslim countries that don't want to be dominated by jihadist visions. But whatever we do, we can't assume that old allies in Europe will be there for us.

Steyn's conclusion is not a joke: "To see off the new Dark Ages will be tough and demanding. The alternative will be worse." ♦

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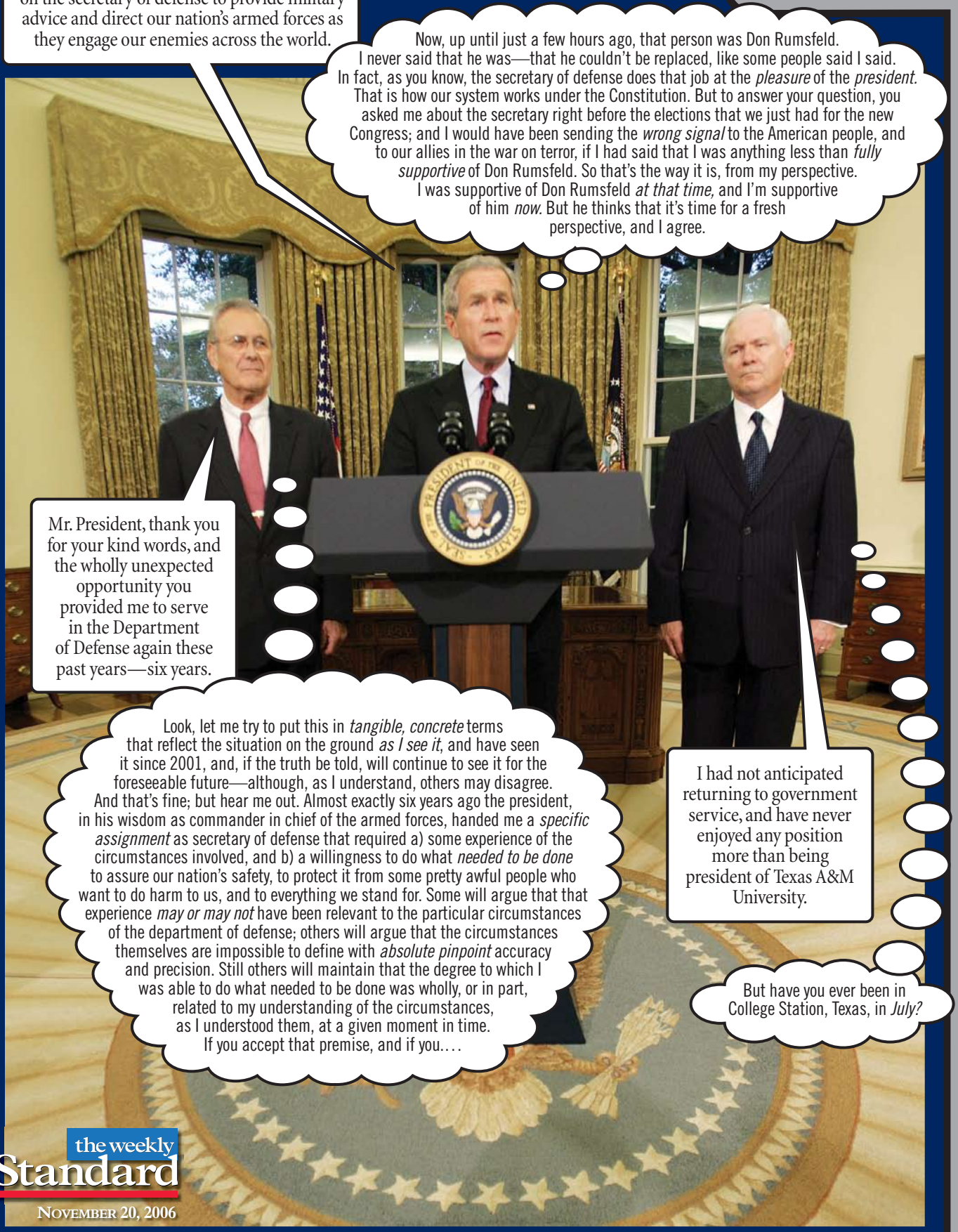
Parody



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